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SHANNON AGUIAR

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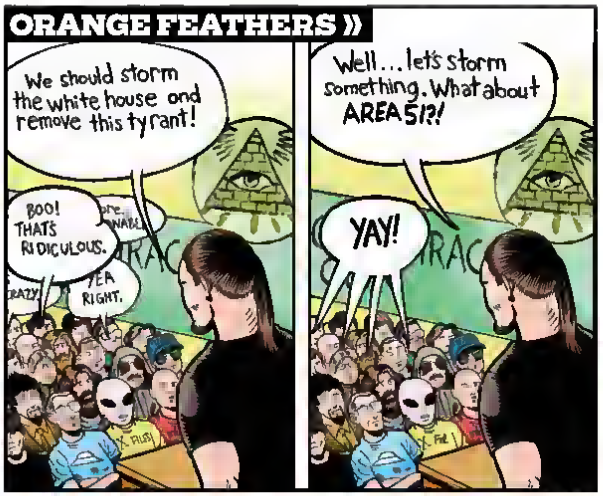

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EDITOR Matt Coker
MANAGING EDITOR Patrice Manstee
SENIOR EDITOR, NEWS & INVESTIGATIONS R. Scott Moxley
STAFF WRITERS Anthony Pignataro, Gabriel San Román
FOOD EDITOR Cynthia Rebollado
CALENDAR EDITOR Aimee Murillo
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT/ PROOFREADER Lisa Black
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS Dave Barton, Joel Beers, Lilledashan Bese, Josh Chesler, Alexander Hamilton Cherin, Haidi Darby, Stacy Davies, Charisma Dawn, Alex Distefano, Erin DeWitt, Steve Donofrio, Jeanette Duran, Edwin Goei, Taylor Hamby, Candace Hansen, Doug Jones, Daniel Kohn, Adam Levinus, Todd Mathews, Greg Nagel, Katrina Nattress, Nick Nuk em, Anne Marie Panetingan, CJ Simonson, Andrew Tenkevich, Jeffanson VanBilliard, Brittany Woolsey, Chris Ziegler

EDITORIAL INTERNS
Shannen Aguair, Janelle Ash, Jackson Guilfoil, Nikki Nelsen

EDITORIAL ART
CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS AlGas, Leslie Agan, Reh Anl, Rob Dobi, Jeff Drew, Scott Feinblatt, Felipe Flores, Bill Mayer, Luke McGarry
PHOTOGRAPHERS Wednesday Aja, Ed Carrasco, Brian Etzen, Scott Feinblatt, John Gilkealey, Eric Hood, Nick Iverson, Allix Johnson, Matt Kellar, Isaac Larios, Danny Liao, Fabian Ortiz, Josué Rivas, Evan Ryan, Matt Uifelder, Miguel Vascancelos, Christopher Victorio, William Vo, Kevin Warn, Micah Wright

PRODUCTION
ART DIRECTOR Federico Medina
PRODUCTION MANAGER Mercedes Del Real

SALES
PUBLISHER Cynthia Rebollado
SALES DIRECTOR Kevin Davis
SR. SALES EXECUTIVE Jason Hamelberg
SALES EXECUTIVES Kathleen Ford, Daniel Vest, Jason Winder

MARKETING
SALES COORDINATOR Megan McElroy
DIGITAL COORDINATOR Dennis Estrada

ADMINISTRATION
PRESIDENT & CEO Duncan McIntosh
VICE PRESIDENT & GENERAL MANAGER Jeff Fleming
HR MANAGER Debbie Brock
AR COORDINATOR Hedruda Ortiz

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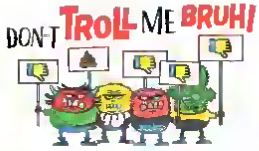

"Without Test Dept., this list is incomplete. I don't know why one of the most important industrial bands, the one engaged politically, is always omitted."
—DP, commenting on Alex Distefano's "The 10 Best Industrial Bands" (Aug. 28, 2014)
We respond Two words, DP. Seth Rich

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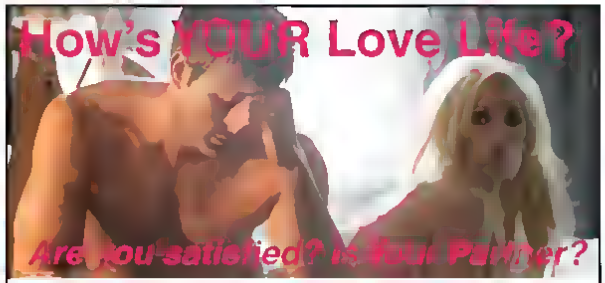

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Springtime for Hitler!

Orange County DA whitewashed neo-Nazi in Trump rally assault trial

When twice slapped in the face by 5-foot-4-inch college student Jessica Aguilar during a clash between white supremacists and anti-fascists at a March 2017 pro-Donald Trump rally in Huntington Beach, neo-Nazi antagonizer Tyler Laube laughed it off as inconsequential.

But to Deputy District Attorney Laila Nikaien, the slaps warranted arrest, prosecution, consumption of public resources for more than two years, 25 court appearances and the chance to put Aguilar, a member of Antifa, in jail for a year, while giving Laube another chance to laugh.

Though the neo-Nazis committed the most brutal acts of violence during the rally, including Laube's unprovoked pummeling of then-*OC Weekly* intern Frank John Tristan, local prosecutors decided to pursue charges against only one person: Aguilar, a Latina.

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»R. SCOTT MOXLEY

You might think Orange County's government officials would go out of their way to prove they aren't aligned with white supremacists, especially given shifting demographics decidedly moving the area's voting habits away from the neanderthal extremists who dominated much of our history. But outbursts stemming from an ugly past continue to emerge. We're home to white students openly celebrating Nazism, donning blackface to degrade African Americans and, long before Trump's rise, wearing costumes belittling Latinos as inferior.

In a recent video, Garden Grove teenagers sang a pro-Adolf Hitler marching song. Newport Harbor High School kids were caught in March proudly playing an alcohol drinking game involving the display of a swastika, arguably the most un-American symbol in history. Not long ago, Huntington Beach attorney Matt McLaughlin advocated the passing of the "Sodomite Suppression Act," proposed legislation that would require the state to put a bullet in the heads of all gay citizens.

In thet aftermath, homosexuality-obsessed white supremacist Samuel Woodward, who carried fascist symbols on his iPhone, lured 19-year-old college student Blaze Bernstein to an inland-OC park in January 2018. Investigators believe Woodward considered himself a soldier in the Atomwaffen Division, which sees an impending race war. Bernstein, who was gay and Jewish, was found buried in a shallow grave; he'd been stabbed more than 20 times. Woodward now faces murder charges.

Laube is a member of a combat-ready white-supremacist outfit called Rise Above Movement (RAM), which espouses anti-Jewish conspiracy theories and Nazi dogma about protecting caucasians under the ruse they're "defending America." According to an FBI report, he worked with other like-minded activists to incite violence against brown-skinned individuals and produced "white unity" videos. At the aforementioned Make America Great Again (MAGA) rally at Bolsa Chica State Beach in Huntington Beach, he gave the "*heil* Hitler" salute. He also traveled across the country to participate in the white nationalist's 2017 melee in Charlottesville, Virginia.

But in *People v. Aguilar*, which played out in West Court near Little Saigon last week, prosecutor Nikaien repeatedly hailed Laube in absentia as an innocent, nonviolent "victim." She told jurors he'd come to the rally merely to express political support for Trump and found himself under attack for exercising his constitutional right of free expression. Video shows his group chanted at Aguilar and her group, "Fuck you, bitch," "Pussy" and "Build that Wall." They also waved a sign as a symbol proclaiming, "Da Goyim Know," referring to an international Jewish plot to control the world.

"Mr. Laube did absolutely nothing [wrong]," Nikaien told jurors in shamelessly deceitful assertions. "He didn't even try to use force."

Such misinformation collides with perceptions that courtrooms are forums for the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Sometimes, unfortunately, they are stages for carefully concocted fantasies. If *Aguilar* proved anything, it's the lengths win-at-all-costs prosecutors in Orange County will go to manufacture a fake reality for juries.

To pull off her charade, the prosecutor needed a willing co-conspirator—which she found in Superior Court Judge Thomas A. Glazier. In pretrial rulings, Glazier granted Nikaien her wish list of facts she did not want jurors to learn. Included in the off-limits information were Laube's white-supremacist beliefs, membership in RAM, use of "*heil* Hitler" salutes, participation in Charlottesville, his criminal record, his beating of Tristan in the face with his fist in front of Aguilar, and even his lack of desire to see her prosecuted for the slaps.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY FEDERICO MEDINA/MUGSHOT COURTESY OF ORANGE COUNTY DA'S OFFICE

"The fact that the victim is a white supremacist or a member of RAM is irrelevant to whether the defendant committed the charged crime," Nikaien successfully argued. "The immense prejudicial effect of admitting such evidence would inappropriately pollute the jury's assessment of the evidence in this case."

Meanwhile, the prosecutor saw nothing prejudicial about trashing Aguilar's character as a lawless, left-wing villain. She repeatedly told jurors the defendant had ties to, in her belief, a trouble-making Antifa that opposes Trump's policies. More than half a dozen times, Nikaien displayed an enlarged photograph of Aguilar wearing that group's black garb with a caption reading, "GUILTY." She added, "She's dressed like a robber," which was ironic given that Laube is the only one with a robbery arrest on his rap sheet.

Other shenanigans during the trial included the prosecutor advising jurors during her closing argument to "consider all the circumstances known to the defendant" at the time of the slaps as displayed in the courtroom on an aired video of the rally. What she didn't tell the panel was that Glazier, a former prosecutor, had allowed her to edit out portions that didn't suit her narrative, including Laube's salute and attack on Tristan, as well as footage showing the neo-Nazis had left other MAGA protesters to aggressively challenge Antifa members from the rear. Having achieved that feat, the prosecutor then argued, "[The defense is] trying to fool you [about what happened]. Don't fall for it."

James Segall-Gutierrez, Aguilar's hamstrung defense attorney, tried to rehabilitate the reputation of his "young idealist" client, who was at the time of the rally studying to become a social worker in Sacramento and felt the need to protest Trump's attacks on Mexican Americans. "She was there resisting fascism, that xenophobia, that hate," Segall-Gutierrez told jurors. "She's just standing there, dancing with her friends and holding up an Antifa flag. They are yelling at her. She flips them off. They're yelling, 'Fuck you, bitch!' She sees [Laube's] right hand coming at her. She smacked him in the face. They were amused."

Getting the last turn to speak, Nikaien said, "[Antifa thinks] all Trump supporters are racists, so 'we have a right to use violence.' Violence in politics is not righteous. It's cowardly. … Words, no matter how offensive, are not enough to justify battery."

Whether the jury, which was comprised mostly of minorities, bought the prosecutor's entire presentation isn't known. But after less than 40 minutes of deliberation, they did accept Nikaien's proposition that Aguilar had committed a misdemeanor. Glazier sentenced her to 20 days in jail, a term that will be suspended if she completes Caltrans roadside chores for 10 days.

RSCOTTMOXLEY@OCWEEKLY.COM

alt-disney»

» GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

COURTESY OF CITY OF ANAHEIM

Early Check-Out

Across from a revived Earl of Sandwich, the former site of the Rainforest Cafe at Downtown Disney lays in ruins just like the Mayan temples it sought to mimic. Pop-Up Disney! A Mickey Celebration occupies ESPN Zone's old location until it's slated to close on Labor Day. AMC Theaters already moved to Anaheim GardenWalk.

Also missing from Downtown Disney is a luxury hotel that never came. On Aug. 21, 2018, the Mouse House called on Anaheim to kill a pair of subsidy agreements, including $267 million in tax breaks for its planned hotel, in the midst of a living-wage campaign and City Council elections.

At that time, Disney had already changed the original location of the project and closed Downtown Disney businesses to prepare for construction. Former Anaheim Mayor Tom Tait asked the city attorney if the action had any bearing on the subsidy agreement he had opposed. It prompted 400 layoffs, meaning a new jobs analysis was needed. The city attorney opined that the contract had become null and void.

"I knew Disney was upset, so I thought they'd fight it," says Tait.

Instead, Tait received a call from Disneyland Resort president Josh D'Amaro's office. D'Amaro and his general counsel met with the mayor and handed him a letter calling for the termination of both subsidy agreements in the interest of ending political acrimony between Disney and Anaheim. "I stuck out my hand and said, 'Thank you' for doing the right thing," Tait recalls. The meeting ended promptly afterward.

Disney also faced the prospect of losing a living wage campaign aimed at resort-area corporations that had "tax rebate" agreements. With the termination of the hotel subsidy and also a policy promising refunds for any potential gate tax levied against Disney, the city later exempted the company from the wage law that passed.

Tait feels he helped Anaheim save $267 million. He also may have prevented Downtown Disney, a development he voted for in 1996 as a councilman, from becoming a tourist fortress.

"Downtown Disney was supposed to be for the community," he says. "Disney's hotel plans would've made it more difficult for the public to get to. That wasn't the original intent back in '96."

Long live Earl of Sandwich!

GSANROMAN@OCWEEKLY.COM

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Bye-eee!

EDIE AUL

Good riddance, you toxic, immature, elitist, shallow colleague. Your pre-occupation with salary, money, men, and bemoaning your job and life was grating. Not only that, but I was also your only friend at the office, and you felt the need to talk down to me and make digs, even telling me I'd have a hard time finding love because I make less than $50K per year. I am really glad you found a higher-paying position and will be leaving. I hope one day you will grow up and find some true fulfillment in life that doesn't involve partying, validation from the opposite sex or material gains. I am sorry for whatever happened to you that turned you into such a misguided individual with crippling insecurities. Goodbye, you lost soul.

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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BACK IN TIME

AUG 28 - SEP 1

Carpenters Remembered

WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN

TRUE BELIEVERS

DISPATCHES FROM MUFON'S 50TH-ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM IN IRVINE

BY ANTHONY PIGNATARO

ILLUSTRATION BY DUSTIN MYERS

Joel Burton Gold is holding a little bottle of his CBD Light Energy oil, which he's particularly proud of because it's infused with moringa. The plant grows in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh and has been used for thousands of years as an antioxidant, food source and aphrodisiac. The oil from it has been blended with perfume, haircare products, engine lubricants and now CBD. Though the plant has been used for thousands of years, many in the west still haven't heard of it.

"A lot of people are hearing about it now," Gold says. "It works on cancer."

Moringa is the most important element in Gold's CBD oil, he says. It's what sets his product apart from all the others on the market today.

"I really think aliens brought moringa to our planet," Gold then tells me. "I really do."

I wish I could say Gold's statement surprised me. But it didn't. Not even close. Spending three days at the Mutual UFO Network's (MUFON) 2019 International UFO Symposium will do that to a person. Held July 26–28 at the Hotel Irvine, the symposium marked MUFON's 50th anniversary as an organization dedicated to "the scientific study of UFOs for the benefit of humanity."

MUFON members paid $329 for access to three days of presentations, lectures, films and the vendor room, whose many proprietors included Gold. (Non-members paid $349.) There were also "private speaker panels," banquets, "field investigator training" sessions and workshops ("How to Resist an Alien Abduction") that cost extra.

Based in Irvine, over by John Wayne Airport, MUFON has for the past five decades dedicated itself to the rigorous study and investigation of unidentified flying objects. (In 2017, *OC Weekly* writer Taylor Hamby profiled MUFON and delved into its history.) The network trains its volunteer members (who are mostly in the U.S., but also reside in more than 40 other countries) to be investigators—to use impartial, rational means in the search for explanations for UFOs.

"I like to keep an objective view," said Peter Derrick, a MUFON investigator who flew in from Saskatchewan to attend the symposium. "I try not to listen to 'noise.' If I want to investigate reports, I have to be objective. I'm not investigating sightings, I'm trying to investigate the reports of sightings. There are other reporting organizations, but MUFON is the most organized, most scientific. They take a rational approach. You have to have a scientific and systematic approach to getting the data. And they're getting better at teaching people."

Meredith Walako agreed. "People come here to listen to the speakers," she said. "The MUFON people are more nuts-and-bolts-oriented."

This sounds wonderful in theory—who doesn't want to see recognized and accepted investigative standards in ufology? But it's hard to read MUFON's 50th-anniversary motto as anything other than a self-own. "50 Years of Never Giving Up." Of course I kept hearing from MUFON presenters and attendees the phrase "it's getting better," and there's undoubtedly truth to that. But there's also truth to the statement that since the first truly modern UFO sighting (Kenneth Arnold's "flying saucers" near Mt. Rainier on June 24, 1947), there has been a complete lack of verifiable evidence that even one UFO was something otherworldly.

Yes, there are photographs, witness statements and reports. But nothing has added up to anything definitive. MUFON officials and investigators repeatedly mentioned throughout the symposium that "70 percent" of UFO reports are just "noise," but if anything, that percentage seems low.

Nobody I heard or spoke to at the MUFON symposium expressed any disappointment that after all these decades, definitive proof remains elusive. If anything, they were hopeful—not that ironclad evidence would soon be found, but rather that the media were finally taking them seriously. In fact, more than one person I spoke with said that there were more reporters covering this MUFON symposium than others.

Though MUFON prides itself on the scientific approach, the vibe I got from the symposium was exactly the opposite: not only an earnest belief in the reality of extraterrestrial life, but also the absolute assurance that (1) such life regularly visits the Earth and (2) the U.S. government knows all about it. Actually, many people I saw and talked with were almost evangelical about the whole idea of UFOs.

"I like UFO shows because they're so much fun," said Liz Alpert, an artist from Sedona, Arizona, who traveled to the symposium to sell her jewelry and paintings. "It's very upbeat. Everybody's in a good mood."

Alpert led *OC Weekly* art director Federico Medina and me over to the symposium's art gallery. After she finished talking to us about her pieces, we crossed the room to where Julliena Okah was playing the violin. The musician was clad in a shimmery dress and standing in front of an array of her own artwork: flowery, almost spiritual paintings of flying saucers. She told us of her alien encounters in Tokyo, Honolulu, Las Vegas, and Nice, France. "All my paintings are based on my own experiences," she said. "I wanted to show how I was connected to a power."

Though others at the convention didn't share the artists' enthusiasm, they were no less passionate. A few feet from Alpert's booth in the vendor room was another table covered in books, stickers and pamphlets, all advertising Atheosthumanity.org.

"We're the lone dissenting voice in the UFO community," said Justin Kohn, who stood near the table. "There's no evidence that the aliens are benevolent,

here for our benefit. There's no evidence that what they say is true. No serial killer is going to tell you that he's a serial killer. They're taking sperm and eggs out of people to create a hybrid race. It all makes perfect sense."

It was hard to avoid the Saucerbrand.com setup in the vendor room. Putting an alien mannequin family on display, all wearing the latest Saucerbrand activewear, will do that.

"We have a product for everybody," said David Salcedo, who started the company a year ago with his daughter and two sons. "It's a good brand for this community. Something like this says a lot, but it's not overkill. Our motto is 'Believe … but believe in style.'"

Salcedo said the family used to watch alien documentaries on the History Channel. Eventually, his kids started making glow-in-the-dark logowear, so they formed a company. They sold out their supply at their first convention, AlienCon in Pasadena. The best-selling item was a black bomber jacket with the glow-in-the-dark saucer logo, Salcedo said, but they're completely sold out of it—even online.

As I talked with the kids about recent customers, they recalled a woman in her 70s who bought a shirt for her dad. Another woman, who was in her 80s, bought a bomber jacket for herself.

"The church lady!" Salcedo says, remembering. "She was a reverend."

Early on during the symposium, I noticed that the attendees were largely older white people. Most were men, but there were a significant number of women, too. This is common with UFO conventions, said Joseph O. Baker, an associate professor of sociology at East Tennessee State University.

"That is generally the case for the conferences, which is a particular form of intensive paranormal engagement," Baker said in a July 29 email. "We did a survey of the 2010 International UFO Congress, and 95 percent of respondents were white. It also skewed toward older people. In terms of explanation, I think these are the people that have the time and money to devote to such pursuits. Also, because of this, at the conference level, you are more likely to see people who have high socioeconomic status compared to the general population of believers."

But Baker also said that UFO believers as a whole don't really skew anywhere in terms of race or age. In a March 2018 interview with *New York Magazine*, Baker further elaborated on the demographics of believers, who are mostly not the tinfoil-hat wearing yokels we see so often in pop culture.

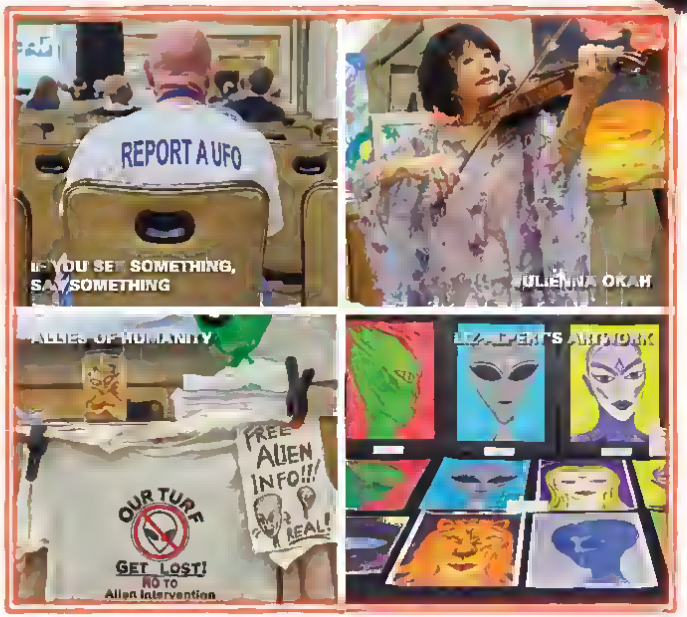
"Men are more likely to believe, and people with lower levels of income are more likely to believe," he said. "We don't really find strong patterns by education, and if we do, there's usually a slight positive effect. It's not ignorance, and it's not low education."

Baker also noted something else, something I saw repeatedly during the MUFON symposium. "One of the other strongest predictors is not participating as strongly in forms of organized religion," Baker told *New York*. "In some sense, there's a bit of a clue there about what's going on with belief—it's providing an alternative belief system. If you look at religious-service attendance, there will be a strong negative effect there for belief in UFOs."

The most interesting, but ultimately frustrating presentation I attended at the symposium was Cheryl Costa's lecture "21st Century UFO Statistics—Analysis and Updates." Costa, who penned the "New York Skies" UFO column for the alt-weekly *Syracuse New Times* until that paper went under a few months ago, co-wrote (with her wife, Linda Miller Costa) the 2017 book *UFO Sightings Desk Reference: United States of America 2001-2015*. It analyzed data from upward of 120,000 UFO sightings collected by MUFON since 2001. The book made it into the *Harper's* READINGS section in May 2018, with a table of all the UFO shapes that have been sighted, ordered from highest frequency (circle) to lowest (square).

"I don't have case studies," Costa told the 50 or so people in attendance. "I have big data. Instead of studying the ant, we decided to study the anthill."

Costa has a fascinating life, in many ways even more fascinating than the UFO data and trends of which she spoke. During the Vietnam War (she was a man then, she transitioned in the 1990s), she served in the U.S. Air Force and worked on telephone poles. Later, she joined the U.S. Navy, serving on submarines. When she returned to civilian life, she got a job with Lockheed Martin. During her lecture, she said she spent her career doing "Tom Clancy stuff," working in the "intelligence community" and on "electronic warfare", she's currently talking with an "LA producer" about a possible television show. As with many people I heard at the symposium, she pronounced the word *nuclear* as "nuke-ular."



PHOTOS BY FEDERICO MEDINA

Costa said she and her wife started with 146,801 MUFON reports. She said they didn't investigate any of them, but tossed out 70 percent on the assumption they were "noise." And of the remaining reports, she said she and her wife were only interested in the incident dates, locations and particular UFO shapes. What they found, Costa said, was intriguing.

Some years are better for sightings than others (2008 and 2012 were big, for instance). As you might expect, the most popular day to see UFOs is July 4. Of the months, February has the lowest number of sightings, though Costa dismissed one audience member's speculation that the fact that it's the shortest month might have something to do with it. There are very few UFO sightings on Monday nights, but Saturday nights are the most popular for them, though Costa disagreed with those who say it's because people are out partying and drunk.

"Have you ever filled out a MUFON sighting report?" Costa asked the audience. "It has all the charm of a credit application."

But not everything Costa said was so clear-cut. One in six people see a UFO, she said, adding she calculated that statistic based on one given in the credits of the 2017 movie *Phoenix Forgotten*. From this, she extrapolated that one in 277 people report a UFO sighting. And though she insisted at the beginning of her lecture that she was solely interested in data, that assurance fell apart when she began talking about the UFO shapes that people are seeing these days. Whereas just a few minutes before she was insisting that her point was entirely data-driven, now she was throwing around terms such as *scout ships*, *shuttles* and *motherships* to explain what the UFOs people were allegedly seeing were supposedly doing. She also wasn't too keen on those in Washington, D.C., dealing with the nightmare scenario she had just outlined.

"If they can't handle me—a tranny lesbian—they sure won't be able to deal with ET!" she said.

The UFO was near the corner of Bolsa and Beach, said Augie Brito of Hollow Earth Worldwide, which makes T-shirts and baseball caps with alien and dinosaur logos. He said his friend saw it, too. It started out as a small dot in the distance, then grew closer until it was the size of a car. It hovered so close to him he could have "thrown a rock at it," he said. It looked like a stingray (which is the 15th most-reported UFO shape, according to Costa's list), pulsating with light but emitting no sound. Then it flew away, with something like seven helicopters chasing after it.

"Then I called my mom," Brito said. "That wasn't something I'd ever seen before. That's where the brand comes from."

It's important to note there are boundaries to what UFO believers consider acceptable. The people who join MUFON (or go to any alien-themed convention) aren't nuts. They just draw the circle around what they believe in a lot further out there than most people. But there is most definitely a threshold. Medina and I found this out very quickly.

"So are you going to rush Area 51?" Medina asked Michael Dale Brown, an official with MUFON's Orange County chapter, referring to the much-publicized idea that UFO believers should just storm the

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

NEWPORT DUNES
WATERFRONT RESORT & MARINA
Upcoming Concerts
8/23 - Genesis Family Album
Tribute to Phil Collins & Genesis
8/31 - Wayward Sons
9/1 - Boots on the Beach
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TRIBUTE to The PSYCHEDELIC FURS
SATURDAY, AUG 24, 2019
ONE DROP REDEMPTION,
Tribute to Bob Marley & The Wailers,
Roots of Mine & Kyle Smith
SATURDAY, SEPT 28, 2019
NOISE POLLUTION,
LOSE YOUR ILLUSION &
A PERFECT TOOL TRIBUTES
to AC/DC, GUNS N' ROSES,
TOOL, A PERFECT CIRCLE
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SATURDAY, NOV 2, 2019
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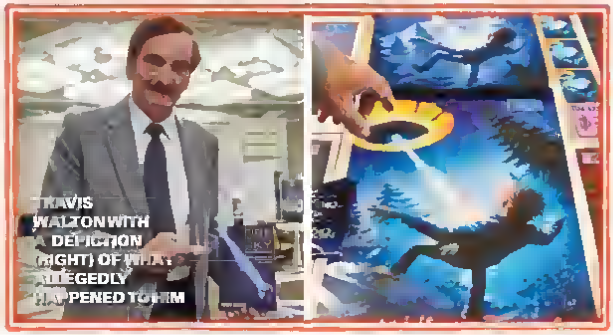
TRUE BELIEVERS

» FROM PAGE 10



PHOTOS BY FEDERICO MEDINA

infamous secret military base that has long been rumored to house alien technology

"No!" Brown fired back. "Those people are crazy! Even the guy who came up with it said it was a joke!"

In the vendor room, across from where Brito was selling his shirts and hats, Joe Merrell sat quietly behind a table covered with jewelry, artwork, small bottles and an intriguing sign that read, "What does a close encounter smell like?" Primarily a visual artist, Merrell said he recently collaborated with Christopher Gordon a perfumer in Los Angeles, to create a scent "inspired by what people reported smelling during close-encounter experiences." Merrell claimed to have read a great deal of UFO literature to find out how to duplicate the odor. The resulting perfume is called Abduction, and Merrell was selling a 30-milliliter bottle for $75 (a 2-milliliter sample was just $10).

"There's a consistency to the experiences," Merrell said. "The response has been really interesting."

According to Merrell, the scents he determined that are most often mentioned during alien abductions sadly aren't the ones typically found in perfume. They include cinnamon, "with a distinct cloying aspect", burning cardboard or paper; yeast/cheese; and overripe/rotting fruit.

Merrell offered me a sample, and I eagerly sniffed. While it wasn't horrible, it also wasn't pleasant.

"It's a niche product," Merrell said. He said he's sold a fair amount of it, though. "It is difficult to make," he added. "All the packaging is handmade. The guy does really high-end fragrances. Some people [who say they've been abducted] have said they don't remember smells. But I've also had people get really emotional. One woman cried, which you can interpret in different ways."

A few booths down from Merrell, Alpert pointed out to me an older guy with a bushy moustache and heavily lacquered orange hair. "He's the most famous UFO abductee in the world," she said of Travis Walton, the author of the 1978 book *Fire In the Sky*. His abduction tale was made into the 1993 movie of the same name, starring D.B. Sweeney.

Walton said that in 1975, he was driving through an Arizona forest with six co-workers (they all worked for a timber company) when they saw a flying saucer. He got out of the truck and was blasted by some sort of energy ray from the saucer. He later awoke onboard the craft, he said, surrounded by short alien creatures. He said he fought them, blacked out, then woke up on the highway, alone.

A speaker at last year's MUFON symposium, Walton was attending this year just to sell books. He stood awkwardly and emotionlessly as people came up to talk with him. Finally sensing an opening, I started chatting with him. Our conversation was strange and centered on Walton's new theory as to what allegedly blasted him, as well as why he was taken aboard the spacecraft.

Walton speculated that the aliens were looking for fulgurites, the crystalline rocks formed when lightning strikes the ground. He said the forest he was in at the time has the second-highest number of lightning strikes in the U.S., and the blast that hit him may have been an accident.

"Perhaps I was taken aboard as a rescue," he said. "They were the only ones who were in a position to save my life."

I have no idea what actually happened to Walton, but I do know that in 2015, Walton appeared on the Fox game show *The Moment of Truth*. Hooked up to a polygraph machine, Walton was asked if he really was abducted by a UFO in 1975. Walton replied, "Yes," but the machine indicated he wasn't telling the truth.

Though the room dedicated to the MUFON Symposium film festival could seat more than 100 people, just five men were inside at 10:20 a.m. on Day 3 for the screening of *UFOs: The Secret History*. Outside the room was a table covered with advertisements for future conferences.

The 28th annual International UFO

Congress at the Sheraton Grand Phoenix runs Sept 4-8 (VIP Starfleet Pass $699) The Los Angeles Quantum Consciousness & Functional Wellness Conference happens Sept 13 15 at the LAX Holiday Inn Hotel ($240) And the Laughlin UFO Mega Conference takes place Feb 15-22, 2020 (early registration $499)

As I glanced over the various ads, I saw Okah down the hall, once again playing her violin

Near the Saucerbrand set-up, Judy Buckles and Rick Adelson covered a table in tiny trinkets They were little pieces of art made from found objects, toys and other bits. Many of them were small robots, inspired by the clunky automatons from 1950s sci-fi and crafted from old electronic components and other junk Other pieces were miniature dioramas, often decorated with toy cars and green space aliens They sell it all under the name Daisy Punk Art.

Sometimes, they decorate the dioramas with captions They'd put alien figures on an old cheese grater and added the line "We've come to make America grate again." There are the same type of alien figures on a rubber stamp with the saying "We come in peace We also come on a rubber stamp"

PHOTOS BY FEDERICO MEDINA

"Everything's one of a kind," said Buckles She said they get their items from flea markets, yard sales, estate sales and antique malls

Adelson and Buckles work as set decorators for the television industry

"It's fun," said Adelson. "We love doing this Judy and I can do five in a day. That's how we did 1,200 in less than four years"

This was their first MUFON symposium, Buckles said They also keep a small display case filled with a few of their pieces in the Antique Station in Orange

The most astonishing thing I heard during the entire symposium came on the morning of Day 3 It was a presentation by Dr Irena Scott, whose talk centered on her UFO experiences in the Boston area in the late 1960s

That didn't shock me. It also didn't shock me when Scott threw in a poltergeist experience as well. ("A toothbrush flew out of my hand and across the room.") Nor did it shock me when Scott had trouble working the slide projector during her talk (Presenters often had difficulties trying to advance slides during their talks.) And I wasn't taken aback when she said that she had spent decades working for the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) as a photo interpretation analyst

No, what threw me was that Scott said her Ph.D was in veterinary science

I'm not saying it's impossible that Scott took her veterinary-science degree over to the DIA and wrangled a job in photo interpretation, though the DIA career website lists its "desired majors" as political science, public/business administration, public policy, government, intelligence and history I'm just saying that if she did indeed get a mid-level job in the DIA doing photo analysis with a doctorate in veterinary science, then that is a pretty substantial indictment of how the U.S handled military intelligence during the Cold War

I walked out of Scott's lecture early—not because of the subject matter, but because the room was really cold I wasn't the only one who felt chilled Just outside the hotel, attendee Lisa Milligan from Newport Beach was standing in the sun.

'Most of the stuff is very interesting," she said "But the speakers I don't know if they're used to speaking in public a lot They're trying to be extremely scientific in how they approach everything. They want to approach it from a serious perspective, but it needs to be a little more interesting. A lot of it is very technical, very dry They need to appeal to a younger audience It really does bother me that there are not a lot of younger people here"

Milligan said this was her second conference, and given everything, she was still glad she came. "I truly believe there's stuff out there" she said. "But 80 to 90 percent of this is explainable I do think that there's a small percentage that is unexplained"

I asked her if she has ever personally witnessed something paranormal

"I'm a psychic medium," she said, and I believed her

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WHERE'S D'ARCY?

OLIVIA BEE

fri/08/23

[EXPO]

Disnerd's Delight

D23 Expo

Sadly, it's going to be a while before we head back to Disneyland. At least until the Galaxy's Edge crowds start to die down a little, or we find a wad of cash under a rock ($150 to get into just *one* park?) But in the meantime, we've got D23 to itch that Disney scratch. Now celebrating its 10th year, the expo—held at the Anaheim Convention Center and put on by the Official Disney Fan Club—has all the shopping, guest appearances, cosplay, art, music and everything else you could possibly want. Sure, there aren't any spinning tea cups or roller coasters, but one thing it does have? *Constant air conditioning.*

D23 Expo at Anaheim Convention Center, 800 W. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 765-8950, d23.com/d23-expo-2019/. 9 a.m., also Sat.-Sun. $59-$200. —ERIN DEWITT

[CONCERT]

Smooth Sounds

Kenny G

Having played the saxophone since he was 17, Kenny G is a master of the easy-listening genre and is widely known for his contemporary, smooth-jazz style. His most popular song, "Songbird," rose to No. 3 on the Billboard charts in the mid-'80s, solidifying his mark on the mainstream scene. Get up close and personal with this American legend at the Hyatt Regency Newport Beach's intimate, outdoor Back Bay Amphitheater. For a satisfying evening out for the ears and the stomach, snag a ticket to the pre-show dinner buffet.

An Evening With Kenny G at Hyatt Regency Newport Beach, Back Bay Amphitheater, 1107 Jamboree Rd., Newport Beach, (949) 729-1234, www.series.byattconcerts.com. 8 p.m. $90-$120. —JANELLE ASH

sat/08/24

[FILM]

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT

The Lavender Scare

In the latter years of McCarthyism—at the height of the Cold War, President Dwight D. Eisenhower decided that gay and lesbian individuals in federal government positions were a risk to national security. Based on the book by David K. Johnson, the film *The Lavender Scare* shines a light on this episode of American history, documenting the horrible treatment and tragic fates of tens of thousands of men and women who lost their jobs—and sometimes their lives—because of their suspected homosexual status. Survivors recount their experiences and the measures they took to fight the intolerant campaigns against them.

The Lavender Scare at ArtTheatre, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435, artheatrelongbeach.org. 11 a.m. $9-$10. —SCOTT FEINBLATT

[LITERARY EVENTS]

Keeping the Zine Alive!

OC Zine Fest

With a little bit of DIY ethos, a zine puts the power of publishing in everyone's hands! Artists, storytellers and poets take to them to give voice to subcultures otherwise ignored. And they even have their own local fest! The sixth OC Zine Fest returns to Anaheim Central Library, promising a packed event with more than 100 vendors, workshops and panels. Skill-sharing sessions will show folks the art of book binding and Cal State Fullerton's Sci-Fi Club is set to talk all about the genre during a panel discussion. Sarah Rafael Garcia, a SanTana author and founder of LibroMobile, closes out the day with her keynote address. Local food pop-up Chicana Vegana will be right outside the library.

OC Zine Fest at Anaheim Public Library, 500 W. Broadway, Anaheim, (714) 765-1880; www.anaheim.net/5005/OC-Zine-fest. 11 a.m. Free. —GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

sun/08/25

[CONCERT]

Get Happy

Happy Sundays

The fourth-annual Happy Sundays festival spreads out among eight different venues in the Zaferia District, located in the heart of Long Beach. Catch the Coathangers at Alex's Bar, Prettiest Eyes at Iguana Kelley's, Neil Hamburger at the Long Beach Playhouse, Devil Season at Supply & Demand, Tropa Magica at Analog Records, Future Past Lives at AYLB&OMFUB, the Molochs at DiPiazza's, Sophie Strauss at Red Leprechaun, Eusebio Asaka at Bamboo Club, and many more. Though some venues are listed as 21 and older, there's plenty for the all-ages crowd to enjoy, too.

Happy Sundays at various locations along Anaheim Street and Pacific Coast Highway, Long Beach; happysundayslbc.com. 2 p.m. Free. —NIKKI NELSEN

[FESTIVAL]

Still In the Building

Elvis Festival

For nearly half of the four decades since his death, the King has been celebrated annually, passionately, if tongue-in-cheekily in Garden "Graceland" Grove. Timed to mark his mid-August 1977 passing, Elvis Aaron Presley lives and dies again during this daylong, free hullabaloo, with his songs done bluegrass-style, harp-and-accordion tributes, impersonators galore, Elvis fan-club presentations, a stilt-walking Elvis-and-Priscilla duo, memorabilia and collectibles, Elvis-themed jewelry and accessories for sale, Elvis Bingo, and a Dunka Dunka Burning Love Dunk Tank. Touchingly, this 20th-annual event is sponsored in part by two area mortuaries.

Elvis Festival along Historic Main Street, between Garden Grove Boulevard and Acacia Parkway, Garden Grove, (714) 267-4657, gcity.org/events/. 10 a.m. Free. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

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mon/08/26

[CONCERT]

Guitar Hero

Doc Pittillo & Friends

When he's not onstage, contemporary Americana man Doc Pittillo has been repairing, restoring and even designing guitars in the greater Orange County area for more than 30 years. While he knows the ins and outs of every type out there, he also knows how to make one sound amazing through his own brand of folksy roots music. Tonight's installment of his month-long residency will have the good doctor perform with his band as well as Roebuck & the Two Dollar Bill Band. Bring your gee-tar-lovin' pals to this feel-good show.

Doc Pittillo & Friends and Roebuck & the Two Dollar Bill Band at the Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039, wayfarercm.com. 8 p.m. Free. 21+. —AIMEE MURILLO

tue/08/27

[CONCERT]

At the Rock Show

blink-182 and Lil Wayne

If the first leg of the blink-182/Lil Wayne co-headlining extravaganza is a sign of things to come, then buckle up! So far, Lil Wayne has threatened to bounce or had issues onstage a handful of times, while blink-182 (sans Tom DeLonge, of course) have been celebrating the 20th anniversary of their seminal album, *Enema of the State*, plus a sprinkling of their greatest hits. All hijinks aside, this is easily one of the best—if not balanced—package tours of the summer.

blink-182 and Lil Wayne at FivePoint Amphitheatre, 14800 Chinon, Irvine, (949) 988-6800; www.livenation.com. 7 p.m. $19.50-$172.50. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

wed/08/28

COURTESY OF WARNER BROS

[FILM]

TELL 'EM LARGE MARGE SENT YA!

Pee-Wee's Big Adventure

If you're looking for a textbook "cult classic," search no further than Paul Reubens' outlandish comedic extravaganza *Pee-Wee's Big Adventure*. Not only is this 1985 film Tim Burton's feature directorial debut, but it's also the first time former Oingo Boingo front man Danny Elfman composed for the screen, leading him to move permanently into cinematic soundtracks. And while the plot is as basic as it gets—Pee-Wee's bike is stolen, so he embarks on a wild and wacky journey to get it back—it's all of the kitsch catchphrases and crazy characters that make the film worth viewing ad infinitum. Featuring a cast of talented Groundlings performers and cameos by the likes of Twisted Sister and Milton Berle, this is one adventure film suited for the most demented among us. (I know you are, but what am I?!)

Pee-Wee's Big Adventure at Regency South Coast Village, 1561 W. Sunflower Ave., Santa Ana, (714) 557-5701; www.regencymovies.com. 7:30 p.m. $9.50. —SR DAVIES

thu/08/29

COURTESY OF BWC ART GALLERY

[ART]

Ollie Art

'Skate | Create: The Art of Skateboarding'

Through both historical and contemporary artwork, "Skate | Create: The Art of Skateboarding" embodies the major aesthetic and attitude of Southern California's skate culture and its evolution into a commercial lifestyle. Local and global legends featured in the exhibit include Shepard Fairey; C.R. Stecyk III; Jeff Ho; Jason Maloney; Lance Mountain; Richard "French" Sayer; Dereck Seltzer; a.k.a. "TMRWLND"; Tina St. Claire, a.k.a. "TFail"; Ed Templeton; Jules Muck; Matthew Perdomi; Jennie Cotterill; Joey Belardi; Tim Shelton; Brian Averill; Catherine Kaleel; Jonathan Hunt; Joshua Moreno; Art of the Endangered; Tristen Adamson; and more.

"Skate | Create: The Art of Skateboarding" at Golden West College Art Gallery, 15751 Gothard St., Huntington Beach; www.goldenwestcollege.edu/art-gallery/. 5 p.m. Through Oct. 5. Free. —SHANNON AGUAIR

[SPECIAL EVENT]

Honoring Local Superstars

We've Only Just Begun: Carpenters Remembered

A blast from the past comes your way from We've Only Just Begun, a cover band that plays songs from the '70s pop duo the Carpenters at the Laguna Playhouse. Singer Michelle Bering Brett will be accompanied by a seven-piece band directed by Harry Sharpe as she performs such hits as "Rainy Days and Mondays" and "(They Long to Be) Close to You." Listening to the gentle tones and smooth melodies from the Carpenters' 14-year-long catalog is an excellent way to remember SoCal legends of yesteryear.

We've Only Just Begun: Carpenters Remembered at Laguna Playhouse, 606 Laguna Canyon Rd., Laguna Beach, (949) 497-2787, lagunaplayhouse.com. 7:30 p.m. Through Sept. 1. $66-$81. —JACKSON GUILFOIL

[CONCERT]

TONIGHT, TONIGHT

Smashing Pumpkins

Despite the back-and-forth with former bassist D'arcy about her (non) participation, the Smashing Pumpkins reunion has gone off mostly without problems. Last year, the band performed to packed arenas and released the album *Shiny and Oh So Bright, Vol. 1/LP: No Past. No Future. No Sun.* Produced by Rick Rubin, the collection wasn't exactly a return to form, but rather a set of songs that left fans mostly pleased—though not so much critics. Also on the bill at the FivePoint Amphitheatre are Noel Gallagher and the Flying Birds (expect a healthy dose of Oasis songs sprinkled in) and AFI.

Smashing Pumpkins, Noel Gallagher and the Flying Birds, and AFI at FivePoint Amphitheatre, 14800 Chiron, Irvine, (949) 988-6800, www.livenation.com. 7 p.m. $24-$498. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

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August 23

SPEAKER TOPIC
LEARNING HOW TO DO LIFE
August 30

SPEAKER TOPIC
TWO WRONGS DON'T MAKE A RELL
September 6

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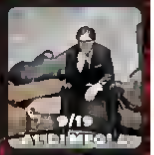
8/29	SAVOY BROWN
8/30	CINDERELLA'S TOM KEIFER
8/31	WILD CHILD (Doors Tribute)
9/6	SINBAD
9/7	THE BABYS
9/8	GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA
9/12	ADRIAN BELEW
9/13	JUNIOS SBOWN
9/14	LED ZEPAGAIN (LedZeppelin Tribute)
9/19	Scott Stapp of CREED
9/19	AL DI MEOLA
9/20	HESMAN'S HOSMITS
9/21	HERMAN'S HESMITS
9/22	OASY PUCKETT
9/27	QUEEN NATION (QueenTribute)
9/28	QUEEN NATION (QueenTribute)
9/29	QUEEN NATION (QueenTribute)
10/2	HAYES CASLL
10/3	JIM MESSIHA
10/4	TRASHCAH SINATRAS
10/5	GEDFF TATE'S OPERATION: MIHDCRIMS
10/9	DDN MCLEAH
10/10	HDRTH MISSISSIPPI ALLSTARS
10/11	DOSSEN
10/12	THE DAH BAND
10/13	JUDY CDLLINS
10/18	SIG BAD VDODOD DADDY
10/19	WHICH DNES PINS (PinkFloyd Tribute)
10/20	SICS WAKEMAN "Grumpy Old Rockstar" Tour
10/24	TAS SENOIT
10/25	AL JARDIH9'S ENDLESS SUMMES (original founding members of the Beach Boys)



UPCOMING SHOWS

10/26	DESPERADD (EaglesTribute)
10/27	TDDD SNIDES
11/1	OINGD BOINGD
	FDSMES MEMSERS
11/2	TYRDNE WELLS
11/3	MICHAEL TOMLINSON
11/7	MDLLY HATCHET
11/8	SUPER DIAMDND (NeilDiamond Tribute)
11/10	DAVID WILCDX
11/19	DAVID SSIGHTON'S SPACE ODDITY (DavidBowieTribute)
11/22	THE ASSOCIATIDH
11/23	OZDMATLI
12/6	JONNY LANG
12/7	SLUE OYSTES CULT
12/20	OARYHo Ho HDEY
12/21	AMSSDSIA
12/22	DavidBenoit CHARLIS SBOWN CHRISTMAS
1/10	DAVID LINDLEY
1/17	MIDGE USE
1/26	JOHN MAYALL
2/13	PHIL VASSAR "Stripped Down"Acoustic Tour
2/18	ALBERT CUMMIHGS
2/23	SUBTON CUMMINGS
3/19	AAROH NEVILLE

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DON'T FORGET THE RICE

PHOTOS BY SHANNON AGUIAR

Lao That Shows Us How

Banana Leaf Kitchen offers Laotian by the ocean

BY EOWIN GOEI

In every part of Banana Leaf Kitchen's name, there's truth in advertising. As it's first and foremost a takeout joint designed for GrubHub orders, the Huntington Beach eatery's kitchen takes up nearly 80 percent of the floor space. There are no public restrooms, and all the food is packed in to-go containers, so they're ready for pick up by customers who aren't staying very long.

You could opt to dine-in, but you'd be doing so inside a small waiting area equipped with six chairs. The first three face a counter against a wall; the other three chairs are at a window that looks out to the parking lot. This dining room—if you can call it that—is too cramped to bring even the tiniest nuclear family and too casual for dates unless you're already past the getting-to-know-you part of the relationship.

But if your date is originally from a Southeast Asian country where banana trees grow like weeds, bring them anyway. They'll be impressed that Banana Leaf Kitchen serves every dish on top of a strip of banana leaf, just like how it's done on the streets of Indonesia, Thailand and Laos. To a Southeast Asian expat, this subtle touch makes a huge difference.

And when you do decide to dine in, you're offered a free plate of hot rice mounded over a leaf strip. The heat releases the leaf's aroma, and as it wafts up to your nostrils, you'll swear the rice tastes better than any you've ever had. But even if the banana leaf weren't there, rice is essential to everything you consume here. The chicken stir-fried with holy basil, onions and yellow bell peppers just wouldn't be the same without rice onto which you can spoon the gravy.

The rice is also required to properly enjoy the specialty of the house: a fire-roasted Lao pork sausage that's packed with lemongrass, kaffir lime leaves, chile and dill. It's sliced into thick segments, with the charred butt-end pieces—where the natural casing puckers—being the most coveted. The more you slather on the chunky green chile sambal that comes on the side, the more you rely on the rice to calm the capsaicin burn crescendoing in your mouth.

You'll also come to realize the rice acts as a buffer against overindulging on things that are all-too-easy to overindulge on. These are dishes such as the deep-fried pork belly, which weighs in at about a pound and consists of bite-sized morsels that are equal parts pig blubber and crackly skin. When you eat a piece, it crunches so loud you wonder if your cardiologist can hear it across town.

If your date is aware of your elevated cholesterol levels, she might eat most of the pork belly to "save you from yourself," leaving you with the chicken satays, which are a slightly healthier consolation prize. They're excellent here. Nearly as thick as the sausages, each dark-meat skewer is marinated with turmeric before being barbecued to charred edges and served with an addictive peanut dipping sauce.

Do what you can, however, to convince her to let you have some of the homemade chicharrón that's packed in a baggie next to the papaya salad. Promise to eat the salad's third component—a huge wedge of cabbage—if you must. The combination of the raw cabbage with the refreshing matchstick strips of papaya stained dark by padaek—the Lao version of fish sauce—is an experience that's amplified tenfold by the addition of the chicharrón croutons. As with the other entrées, you also want lots of rice here. Even the mild version of the salad will have flames leaping from your mouth.

The kitchen does make non-spicy dishes. The homemade fish cakes are as soft as marshmallows. And the pad see ew—with its soy sauce-slicked belts of silken rice noodle—is just as luscious and comforting here as at any Thai takeout. But if it somehow tastes extra-special, it's again because of that banana leaf.

Although Banana Leaf Kitchen packages its meals in boxes made of recycled materials, I look forward to the day when the rest of the Western world realizes that banana leaves have always been the perfect food containers. Southeast Asians have used them in that capacity for millennia. Collapsed into cones, they function as bowls, folded over into tetrahedrons, they're moisture-proof takeout vessels. And even the most advanced biodegradable and sustainable Styrofoam substitute can never claim what a banana leaf has always been able to do, which is demonstrated perfectly at Banana Leaf Kitchen: make the food taste better.

BANANA LEAF KITCHEN
19092 Beach Blvd., Ste. V, Huntington Beach, (714) 377-6614, www.bananaleafkitchen
Open daily, 11 a.m.–10 p.m. Dishes, $7–$15
No alcohol

WHAT THE ALE
» GREG NAGEL

Noods On the Beach

There are some insane food festivals, but the one coming up in Huntington Beach might top them all. You might find yourself slurping endless ropes of noodles on a sandy beach while getting down to a set by DJ Snoopadelic with a can of craft beer in one pocket and your honey in the other.

Foodbeast's Nood Beach Food and Music Festival kicks off on Sept. 1 at SeaLegs At the Beach, a venue perched oceanside, and I must say, I'm just as excited to hit a food event that isn't on hot summer blacktop as I am to see Snoop.

Twenty chefs are throwing down the gauntlet of epic noodle dishes, including Slapfish, with a brown butter lobster bucatini; Nitrolado with a savory noodle doughnut; and the Golden Marrow, which offers truffle, garlic and dessert marrow options. Seriously—*dessert marrow?*

The ultimate beer pairing for this hot and spicy noodle fest is undoubtedly a cold, crispy boi such as the SeaLegs Mexican lager exclusively produced by Anaheim's Towne Park Brew. The brewery has been unleashing batch after batch of revamped beers since hiring head brewer Andy Marshall. I'd go so far as to say Towne Park is Orange County's most improved brewery overall, thanks to Marshall's longtime experience and perseverance.

According to Towne Park owner Brett Lawrence, also available at the event will be the brewery's IPA, blonde and "our huge 19.2 ounce canned michelada."

Tickets are on sale now via nood-beach.com. General admission costs $40, while VIP—which includes access to a private area and a complimentary beer tasting until 3 p.m. (cans can be purchased after)—is $80. Use code Foodbeast4 to save $10!

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GREG NAGEL

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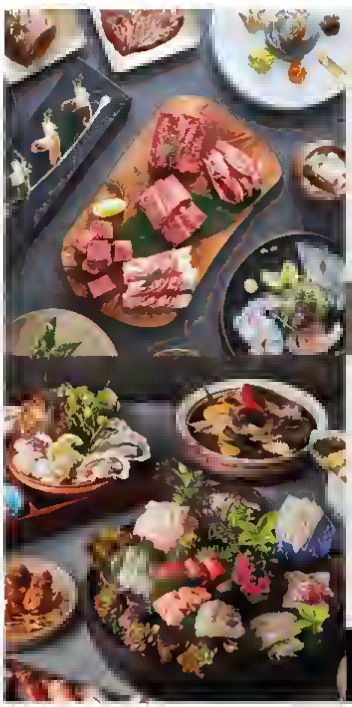

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AVO-LICIOUS

DOMINIQUE ZAMORA

From Scarborough to Fresno

Sharing memories of and a recipe for avocado shake

THE ROOT
» CHARISMA MADARANG

My earliest memory of the humble avocado goes back to when I was a kid in Scarborough, Toronto; I was maybe 5 or 6 years old and hanging around the block where my cousins lived. My friend Rochelle lived across the street with her parents, Tito Ross and Tita Lolit. Often, their garage would be wide open. And in the summer, there would be a pile of ice candy, a Filipino trifecta of fruit, condensed milk and sugar that had been blended, then frozen in small plastic bags. Tita Lolit was a saint, and she knew those candies were the highlight of our humid Canadian summers. She would make all our favorite flavors: buko, mais con queso, munggo. But my favorite was the avocado, and I'd scan the colorful stack for a hint of green.

My second-earliest memory of the rough-skinned fruit settles in the kitchen at my dad's house in Los Angeles. My stepmom was churning out buckets of avocado shake, a Pinoy classic. She chucked cups of ice, sliced avocado, whole milk and sugar into her blender, spinning it all together until it became thick and creamy. Sometimes, she'd add vanilla ice cream and spike it with a bit of lemon juice, other times, she'd switch out the whole milk for condensed milk. One of those times, I drank about a pitcher of avocado shake, happily sitting at the kitchen table while she handed me glasses of a slightly different version each time, moving from stove to blender to me, smiling and laughing.

My third-earliest memory of avocado was in Fresno. We had moved into a new house with my mom and stepdad. My mom was mashing avocados in a bowl. She opened the fridge and pulled out a jug of milk, mixed the milk with the mashed fruit, sprinkled in white sugar, stirred it a bit more, then handed me the bowl. I looked at it gingerly, unsure about the floating chunks of avocado, then ate a spoonful. Like those ice candies in Scarborough, it was bliss.

After that, I would make my own version whenever we had avocados in the pantry. Below is my take on those sweet memories. It's updated to be sans dairy and white sugar, but if you feel inclined, feel free to swap those back in.

AVOCADO SHAKE RECIPE

The Base: Start with one avocado for every five cups of coconut milk and six heaping tablespoons of agave syrup. From there, it's simply a matter of adding everything to a blender until you get a smooth, sippable consistency. This serves about two to three people.

Tweak It: This shake starts off thinner and milder than most versions, which allows for you to tweak it to your preference. If you want something traditionally icy and thicker, cut down the coconut milk by half and replace one of the cups with ice. For something sweeter, cut down on the milk and add a scoop of coconut-milk ice cream with ice. To contrast the sweetness, squeeze in some fresh lime juice.

Turn It Into Ice Candy: To turn the shake into candy, you'll need to cut back on the coconut milk and introduce vegan condensed milk for a thicker consistency. (Tip: You can make vegan condensed milk by simmering full-fat coconut milk with coconut sugar.) Blend one cup of coconut milk and half a cup of vegan condensed milk for every avocado. I like to start off with a lot of agave (about one-third of a cup), but you can add more or less according to your taste. Once blended, pour the mixture into plastic casing and tie the end into a knot. This will take about three hours to fully freeze.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: BRANZINO, OYSTERS AND GRILLED SPANISH OCTOPUS

PHOTOS BY GREG NAGEL

Catch of the Day

Flying through TAPS' new 'Jet Fresh' seafood menu

EAT & DRINK THIS NOW
» GREG NAGEL

It's odd to think of our food flying around the world just to be eaten. Even though we live next to the vast Pacific Ocean, there's something exotic about dipping a fork into a steamy John Dory from New Zealand, and let's face it, that fish probably has more frequent flyer miles than I do

At TAPS' Fish House & Brewery, the menu seems to have been revamped to focus on the sea. The "From the Land" section has been reduced to roughly 20 percent of the giant two-page menu. So we decided to skip the prime cuts, and instead put on our goggles, plug our noses and wave one hand in the air as if we were snorkling off the *S.S. TAPS*

As proof that I'll order anything on a menu with the word *yuzu* in it, I got the soy yuzu-marinated hamachi collar for one side of the table and the grilled Spanish octopus for the other. I'm not sure why I love yuzu so much—perhaps because the acidity of the citrus fruit's juice can brighten up any food or drink. The hamachi is deeply charbroiled until the crust develops a thin shell that, when broken with a fork, bursts into easily devoured bites of light, flaky meat. It's resting in a soy fish-sauce aioli, which pairs perfectly with Poseidon, a triple IPA at 8.5 percent ABV that highlights the tropical-citrus notes of the dish.

The octopus must have been great, as I didn't get to snag anything more than a photo, but the guilty looks from the rest of the table were telling. The tender tentacles are sous vide for eight hours at 158 degrees, making them perfectly fork-shreadable, and the veggie panisse cakes and caper berries resting in the smoked paprika puttanesca sauce were "plate-lickable," according to my wife. The obvious pairing would be a dirty-dry martini to match the salty caper berries, but she claimed the Irish Red ale matched the caramelized flavors of the dish perfectly

For mains, the new "Jet Fresh" menu changes weekly to reflect what's caught and available TAPS paired with Santa Monica Seafood for this section, and the only thing the kitchen tries to keep on hand is the branzino from Greece, which is filleted whole and comes with your choice of two heaping sides. The fun part is picking a topping to be drizzled on as it's served, which is perfect for those Boomerang Instagram stories. We went with chimichurri as it's a perfect match for the light, sweet fish, and we paired it with a Björn In the USA unfiltered pilsner Why pilsner? It's just as jet-fresh as the fish and won't overpower the delicate flavors.

TAPS FISH HOUSE & BREWERY
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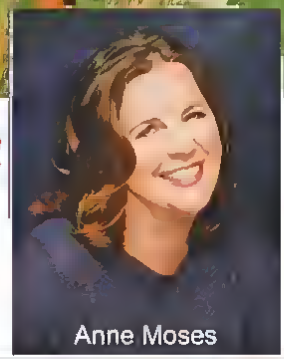

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CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A VOLUNTEER WITH A PATIENT, A PATIENT WITH A NURSE, AND WARD 5B PIONEERS

PHOTOS COURTESY OF RYOT

Hope In Times of Darkness

5B shines on heroes from the heyday of 'gay cancer' and evil Bill Dannemeyer

BY MATT COKER

Memory compresses over time to the point at which you barely remember when events were unfolding slowly. For instance, most around during World War II but not actually in the shit have experienced so much life since then that their most vivid recollections probably concern the celebratory sigh of relief when that conflict was declared over.

I know that's how it is for me and another war, recalling the early days when AIDS was known as "gay cancer," Ronald Reagan's administration callously treated the epidemic as a joke and there were unwarranted fears of catching the fatal disease from a sneeze.

However, as a straight individual who never stuck a needle in his arm, nor had personally known (let alone had the honor of sharing the final moments with) a sufferer, I must be reminded of those memories because when AIDS and HIV pop up in my consciousness, now I think about how they have become largely manageable. (Praise be.)

So, like the History Channel's blanket coverage of WWII hopefully reminding us "never again" (despite the rise of neo-Nazism), it's important that co-directors Paul Haggis and Dan Krauss have come along with the sobering and illuminating documentary *5B* to also proclaim, "never again" (despite the rise of the neo-culture war, let alone health care for all).

5B takes us back to those days when ground zero for the gay cancer puzzling physicians was San Francisco. Ignorance surrounding the illness and how it spread was so acute then that San Francisco General Hospital staff refused to work around sufferers. Saying that is one thing, but what's amazing about *5B* is the actual footage from the hospital of food trays stacked high outside rooms because no one would pick them up and patients in agonizing pain, writhing and moaning alone in their beds.

Haggis and Krauss also show the Orange County connection to the stoking of the gay cancer—and later AIDS—fears. It was none other than then-Congressman William E. Dannemeyer (R-Fullerton), who at age 89 took his seat next to Satan earlier this summer, as we learned in my colleague Anthony Pignataro's July 16 obituary "Rest in Hate, William Dannemeyer."

In the '80s, Dannemeyer went beyond the general—calling for bans of blood and organ donations by gay men, including those in monogamous relationships, characterizing anti-discrimination laws as attempts to "advance homosexuality", sponsoring a bill to ban anonymous AIDS testing—to the specific when it came to San Francisco General Hospital. The film shows press conferences at which Dannemeyer, with a couple of those fearful hospital staffers by his side, called for the removal of dying gay men from the facility. In another sequence, the homophobe suggests hospital administrators should be criminally charged for treating gays.

Apologies for the hateful backgrounder, but I believe it is necessary before introducing the main subjects of the film, the heroic doctors, nurses and other staff members who fought to create Ward 5B so loving care could be given to patients who had been rejected by society, other medical-care professionals and, most sadly of all, their own families.

Before the identification of HIV/AIDS and the knowledge about the intimacy required to contract the disease, these nurses practiced "radical touch," or the holding of patients' hands, stroking of their arms and tons of hugs. There was no way to save the poor souls in those days, but a small group of hospital staffers were going to make sure the doomed left this world feeling loved. It breaks your heart to see archival footage of a man who is dwindling to nothing thanking a nurse for being the first person to touch him in a year. Or the aunt who today expresses shame for having abandoned her dying nephew.

It is enlightening—and during these fractured days, inspiring—to witness interviews with some of the quiet heroes today, recalling those bygone moments. They reinforce hope at a time when all hope appears lost, just as it did back then. Maybe we'll pull through this together yet.

Another local connection to *5B* is Jackson Browne, the Rock and Roll Hall of Famer who graduated in 1966 from Sunny Hills High School in Fullerton, where Dannemeyer had moved to seven years before. Browne and Grammy Award nominee Leslie Mendelson co-released "A Human Touch" as the title song to *5B*. Browne and Mendelson have been performing the song written by Steve McEwan during a concert tour that included an Aug. 16 stop at the Pacific Amphitheatre in Costa Mesa.

Billed as the only documentary to receive a 100 percent "fresh" score on Rotten Tomatoes, *5B* was shown in May at Cannes, where it won raves and awards. (Haggis, who also directed the controversial drama and 2006 Best Picture Oscar winner *Crash*, was removed from Cannes promotional materials because he'd recently been slapped with rape and sexual-harassment allegations, all of which he denies.)

The documentary had a brief June theatrical run in the States, and on Aug. 20, it began an exclusive, one-week engagement on Verizon Media's Fios TV. Starting this Tuesday, *5B* will be available to stream not only on that platform, but also 1,000 others, including Amazon Video, FandangoNow, Google Play, iTunes, Microsoft Movies & TV, Redbox On Demand, Sony Playstation, and VUDU, as well as on-demand via cable providers AT&T U-Verse, Charter, Comcast, Cox, DirecTV, Dish, and Spectrum.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

Can You Send Killer Robots a Rambo-gram?

BY MATT COKER

Blinded By the Light. A put-upon British teen (Viveik Kalra) of Pakistani descent does not find his voice until a classmate (Aaron Phagura) introduces him to the music of Bruce Springsteen. *Various theaters; www.fandango.com. Thurs., Aug. 22. Visit website for locations, show times and ticket prices.*

Overcomer. Minister Alex Kendrick's new faith-filled dramedy has him playing a disillusioned high-school coach to an unlikely athlete (Aryn Wright-Thompson) facing the biggest race of her life. *Various theaters; www.fandango.com. Thurs.-Thurs., Aug. 22-29. Visit website for locations, show times and ticket prices.*

Kerry Tribe: Double. The artist's single-channel video work has five women who nominally resemble one another reflecting on subjects ranging from their impressions of Los Angeles to their participation in this project. *Grand Central Art Center; www.grandcentralartcenter.com. Open Tues.-Thurs., 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Fri.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Through Sept. 22. Free.*

Apocalypse Now: Final Cut. Francis Ford Coppola's newly restored and remastered final cut. During the height of the Vietnam War, an Army captain (Martin Sheen) is sent deep into the Cambodian jungle to find and terminate with great prejudice a completely bonkers colonel (Marlon Brando). *The Frida Cinema; thefridacinema.org. Thurs.-Sun., Aug. 22-25, 1, 4:30 & 8 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Street Fighter. This 25th-anniversary screening event begins with a rock tribute to the music of the *Street Fighter* video game. Then comes Steven E. de Souza's martial arts flick about a military colonel (Jean-Claude Van Damme) joining other heroes in fighting against a tyrannical dictator (Raul Julia). Afterward, there is an audience Q&A with cast members Miguel Núñez Jr. (who plays Dee Jay) and Andrew Bryniarski (Zangief). *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Thurs., Aug. 22, 7:30 p.m. $15.*

Captain Marvel. Carol Danvers (Brie Larson) becomes one of the universe's most powerful heroes. *The Strawberry Bowl, (714) 928-3894. Thurs., Aug. 22, 8 p.m. Free.*

Fiddler: A Miracle of Miracles. Max Lewkowicz's new documentary explains the origin story behind the Broadway musical *Fiddler On the Roof*. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Opens Fri. Call theater for show times and ticket prices.*

Arrow of the Orion. Katsushi Sakurabi's new anime from the Dan-MAchi franchise poses the question: Is it wrong to try to pick up girls in a dungeon? *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 6 (dubbed) & 8 p.m. (subtitled). $15.*

Mary Poppins Returns. Rob Marshall's 2018 reboot of the Disney classic has the magical nanny (Emily Blunt) returning to help the grown Banks siblings and Michael's children through tough times. *Grant Howald Park, (949) 644-3151. Fri., 6:30 p.m. Free, also at Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort & Marina, (949) 729-3863. Fri., dusk. Free, but there is a fee to park.*

The Jungle Book. In the 1967 animated movie, Bagheera the Panther (voiced by Sebastian Cabot) and Baloo the Bear (Phil Harris) have a hard time convincing a boy (Bruce Reitherman) to leave the jungle for human civilization. *Lake Forest Sports Park, ca-lakeforest.civicplus.com. Fri., 7:30 p.m. Free.*

Hairspray. An overweight teen (Ricki Lake) becomes the star of a popular teen dance show, then pushes for racial integration of the program. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Fri., 10 p.m., Mon.-Tues., 2:30, 6 & 8 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

A Boy Named Charlie Brown: 50th Anniversary Restoration & Rerelease. Linus gives his blanket to Charlie Brown for good luck in a national spelling bee, realizes he can't live without it, travels with Snoopy to New York to fetch it and discovers of Chuck misplaced it. *Starlight Cinema City, (714) 870-6700. Sat. 11 a.m. $6; also at the Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat., noon & 2 p.m. $7.50; and Regency Westminster, (714) 893-4222. Sat., noon. $8.50.*

Incredibles 2. Swim and/or float as the animated 2018 smash hit from Disney-Pixar and director Brad Bird rolls on a big screen. *William Woollett Jr. Aquatics Center, (949) 724-6717. Sat., 6:30 p.m. $2-$4.*

Chopping Mall. Young shopping-mall employees stay after work to party—before the robot security system goes on a killing spree. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sat., 7 p.m. $15.*

Rio. Blu (voiced by Jesse Eisenberg), a domesticated macaw from small-town Minnesota, meets the fiercely independent Jewel (Anne Hathaway) and follows her to Rio de Janeiro.

COURTESY OF CONCORDE PICTURES

Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort and Marina, (949) 729-3863. Sat., dusk. Free, but there is a fee to park.

My Neighbor Totoro. Satsuki and her sister Mei move with their father to a new home in the countryside, where the house and nearby woods are full of strange and delightful creatures. *Various theaters; www.fathomevents.com. Sun., 12:55 p.m. (dubbed), Mon., 7 p.m. (subtitled), Wed., 7 p.m. (dubbed). $12.50.*

The Godfather Part II. Coppola brilliantly crafts two stories showing young Vito Corleone (Robert De Niro) growing up in Sicily and 1910s New York and Michael Corleone (Al Pacino) growing into his role as the family crime boss in the 1950s. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Sun., 1 & 5 p.m.; Wed.-Thurs., Aug. 29, 2:30 & 7:30 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Paris, Texas. An aimless drifter (Harry Dean Stanton) re-emerges from the desert after being missing from his family for four years and tries to reconnect. *The Frida Cinema, thefridacinema.org. Mon.-Thurs., Aug. 29, 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m. $7-$10.50.*

Madagascar. A group of animals who have spent their entire lives in a zoo must adjust to living in the wild. *Various Regal/Edwards theaters, regmovies.com. Tues., 10 a.m. $1.*

Back to the Future. Michael J. Fox plays a teen who travels back in time to when his parents were still in high school. *Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas Laguna Niguel at Ocean Ranch Village, (949) 373-7900, also at Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas Rancho Santa Margarita at Santa Margarita Town Center, (949) 635-1888. Tues., 7 p.m. $10.*

Monty Python and the Holy Grail. Follow Arthur, King of the Britons, Sir Lancelot the Brave and Sir Robin the Not-So-Brave-as-Sir-Lancelot as they follow God's directive to find the Holy Grail in this 1975 cult classic. *Directors Cut Cinema at Regency Rancho Niguel, (949) 831-0446. Tues., 7:30 p.m. $8.*

Pee-Wee's Big Adventure. Eccentric man child Pee-Wee Herman (Paul Reubens) sets off on an adventure to find his stolen, beloved, customized red Schwinn. *Regency South Coast Village, (714) 557-5701. Wed., 7:30 p.m. $9.*

Ne Zha. Born with unique powers and destined by prophecy to bring destruction to the world, young boy and social outcast Ne Zha must choose between good and evil. *IMAX at AMC Tustin Legacy at the District, (714) 258-7036. Thurs., Aug. 29. Call theater for show times and ticket prices.*

Anime Afternoons. Come watch and discuss anime favorites. *Fullerton Public Library, (714) 738-6327. Thurs., Aug. 29, 6 p.m. Free.*

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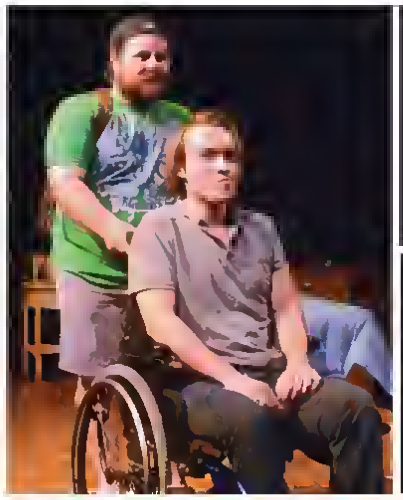

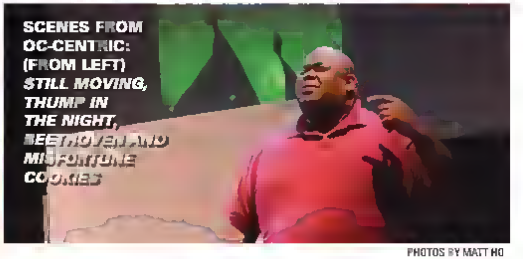

SCENES FROM OC-CENTRIC: (FROM LEFT) *STILL MOVING*, *THUMP IN THE NIGHT*, *BEETHOVEN AND MISFORTUNE COOKIES*

PHOTOS BY MATT HO

Uncommon Territory

New local plays take center stage at OC theaters

BY JOEL BEERS

Call it an explosion, a trend, a coincidence or a conspiracy, but something is up with new plays by local playwrights this summer. By the end of September, 15 new or at least original plays by local writers will have been produced at six venues since July. That is unprecedented in the history of OC theater.

Even if six of those 15 works are staged readings, not fully produced shows, and nine stem from two new-play festivals (one in its ninth year, and the other visiting OC for the first time), it's still a lot of new work, something the founders of the county's first and oldest festival celebrating local writers couldn't be happier about. "This does seem to be a really striking moment, in that you have an exciting plethora of new work this summer," says Eric Eberwein, who started OC-Centric with Tamiko Washington. "[It's] a real change from when we started, when [the country] was coming out of the Great Recession and the local theater scene was very risk-averse. But I think there's been some sort of pendulum swing, with new plays now ... piquing people's interest."

OC-Centric's three one-acts close this weekend, as does Michael Mejia's *Three Letter Words*, the second new work staged by Santa Ana's the Wayward Artist this summer. Next weekend, two ambitious projects take the spotlight: the inaugural *Page to Stage: That's What She Said*, which features staged readings by six women that explore the female voice, hosted by the Brea Curtis Theatre, and *Canto de Anaheim*, a play by Sara Guerrero in conjunction with the Pacific Symphony and the city of Anaheim based on a historic timeline of the city's Mexican American community and incorporating some stories written by a cat named Gustavo Arellano.

Next month, STAGEStheatre will mount new plays by Matt Cox and David Macaray, and the Garage Theatre in Long Beach will stage Terra Taylor Knudson's one-woman show *Willy's Lil' Virgin Queen*, a coming-of-age story of the playwright and the role Shakespeare's plays had in it.

Why the sudden intense focus on new plays by local writers? Eberwein and Washington have their theories: the creation of the OC Theater Guild, which gives heads of local theater companies a chance to meet and discuss challenges and opportunities, the rise of MFA playwriting programs, which has "elevated the general tenor of new plays to a level that has never been seen before," according to Eberwein, and perhaps most important, a serious emphasis on inclusion, with more women and playwrights of color writing plays because theaters want to produce them.

"There is an interest, a vital energy that is surrounding new plays right now," says Washington. "And I think one reason is that there are so many different voices being heard. We're not getting one particular kind of style or one kind of writer."

The more varied the voices, the more disparate the stories, and if there is one link between the three one-acts that are part of this year's OC-Centric it's that each tells "uncommon stories," Eberwein says.

Joni Ravenna's *Beethoven and Misfortune Cookies* is based on a racially charged true story about a beloved university professor who's fired after a complaint by a white student about his use of profanity in class. This forces him to deal with "all that he loves being taken away in an instant," Eberwein says.

Still Moving, by 17-year-old Ben Susskind, is about the rocky beginnings of a friendship between a withdrawn quadriplegic college freshman and his abled roommate.

And Lydia Oxenham's *Thump In the Night* is a dark comedy about the death of an elderly upstairs neighbor that examines "the very humorous irony about the effort of trying to find community among your neighbors," Eberwein says.

While the ninth-annual festival has a new sponsor in Chapman University's Department of Theatre and Dance, it has survived and grown thanks to the hard work of Eberwein and Washington. "We were an original festival that had never been seen before [in Orange County]," Washington says. "And I think that kind of helped to promote [the idea] to local theaters to become interested in new plays."

GC-CENTRIC
at Moulton Center Studio Theatre, 300 E. Palm Ave., Orange, (714) 902-5718, oc-centric.com. Thurs.-Fri., Aug. 22-23, 8 p.m.; Sat., 2 & 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 & 7 p.m. $12-$23

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COSTA MESA GEM FAIRE Various crystals, stones and beads will be sold, as well as silver and gold jewelry. Fri., noon–6 p.m.; Sat., 10 a.m.–6 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.–5 p.m. $1. OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa. (714) 708-1500. www.onfair.com

GC NIGHT MARKET One of the largest, most-anticipated events of the year with wild and inventive foods available next to familiar savory dishes. Fri.–Sat., 4 p.m.–midnight; Sun., 4-11 p.m. $5; food sold separately. OC Fair & Event Center, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa. (714) 708-1500. ocnightmarket.com

SUMMER OF SAMADHI A festival with multiple yoga classes, workshops on holistic treatments, music, sound-bath meditations, art and more. Sat., 11 a.m.–4 p.m. Free. Yoga Sapien, 619 N. Coast Hwy., Laguna Beach, (949) 416-3996. www.yogasapien.com

NINTH ANNUAL TASTE OF LONG BEACH Get your fill of various beer, cider and kombucha samples at this event featuring several brands you won't find at the grocery store. Sat., noon–5 p.m. $32.50–$42.50. 21+. Shoreline Aquatic Park, 209 Aquarium Way, Long Beach, www.tastsofbrews.com

***IMAGE IN LA*—A LITERARY SHOWCASE & BOOK LAUNCH** The series' second anthology, *Chasing the Elusive Dream*, is celebrated. Sat., 7 p.m. Free. Gatsby Books, 5525 E. Spring St., Long Beach, (562) 208-5862, gatsbybooks.com

A BODY IN THE G Tim Miller performs a one-man, one-night only show of stories from his book of the same name, including the tale of him climbing in the Hollywood sign. Sat., 8 p.m. $15 suggested donation. Fonrd Theatre, 509 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 433-3363. www.foondtheatre.org

REGG VINTAGE & MAKER'S MARKET Check out the wares offered by a select group of vintage sellers and makers of arts and home goods. Sun., 9 a.m. Free. Along Del Prado Avenue, Dana Point; redomarket.com

***GRATEFUL AMERICAN*—AN EVENING WITH GARY SINESE** The actor discusses stories featured in his book *Grateful American: A Journey From Self to Service*, of which all attendees will receive a copy. Sun., 7 p.m. $18; active military, veterans and first responders, free. Temple Bat Yahm, 1011 Camelback St., Newport Beach, (949) 644-1959, thy.org.

PHOTOS BY JAMES QUINONEZ

No Strings Attached

Ty Segall drops the guitar on *First Taste*

BY STEVE DONOFRIO

Before surf-y, garage rock bands were a dime a dozen in Orange County, Laguna Beach multi-instrumentalist Ty Segall blazed the trail. With a distinctive fuzzed-out tone, an ear for experimentation and a knack for songwriting, the axe-wielding psych-rock prophet has been one of the genre's most prolific artists for more than a decade. Segall has proven his versatility over the course of more than a dozen solo albums and a myriad of collaborations, playing loud and heavy rock & roll, acoustic glam rock and everything in between. However, his latest album, *First Taste*, released earlier this month, is his most unconventional work yet.

The concept behind *First Taste* is fairly straightforward: an entire album with no guitar. For Segall, this is unexpected, especially considering his blazing six-string has been at the center of nearly everything he's put out over the past 11 years. But it also seems to be the next logical step for someone who has consistently pushed creative boundaries.

Segall came up with the idea when he started playing a bouzouki. "[It's] a Greek instrument," he explains. "There's also an Irish one, but I got the Greek style. I just wrote a song on it, and I was like, 'Wow, this is cool. … This feels different from writing on a guitar.' I just kept writing and pretty much figured it would be a cool idea to try to write a whole record without a guitar and see what that feels like. I eventually got more and more instruments I didn't know how to play and that were kind of strange to me, and yeah, I ended up with these songs."

First Taste is packed with textures and melodies that are uncommon in rock records. But thanks in part to the album's overall production, it still sounds unmistakably like Segall's work. He was able to achieve his signature tone with some unlikely instruments. "They're all kind of run through different pedals or amp setups," he says. "Some of them have the same setup as my guitar rig; others have D.I. [direct inject or direct input] stuff going on—it's all over the place. There's definitely some acoustic stuff, as well."

From the bone-crushing, synth-driven first track, "Taste," to the stripped-down "Ice Plant," which sounds like something Harry Nilsson and Brian Wilson might have written together while passing a joint, the album is as cohesive as it is diverse.

While Segall's past rock influences have been somewhat obvious, it's significantly harder to pin down what he was moved by when he wrote this album. "I was listening to a lot of Fela Kuti, Aphrodite's Child, a lot of funk and soul—you know, a lot of percussive world music," he says.

Despite the international flavor, *First Taste* is still an American hard-rock album at its core. A great deal of its heaviness comes from the two drum sets (recorded in stereo) that give most of the songs a lush, thumping backbeat. This is most apparent on tracks such as "I Worship the Dog" and the almost-Zappa-esque "Self Esteem."

This was a way for Segall to maintain some level of familiarity in otherwise-uncharted waters. "I love playing drums, and I wanted it to still be a heavy record," he says. "If I'm not going to play guitar, I'm going to make sure there are a ton of drums all over the place on the record."

Though Segall recorded several instruments and a few songs by himself, *First Taste* does also feature the Freedom Band. The group have served as Segall's primary backing band in recent years and include some of his longest-running musical collaborators, such as Mikal Cronin and Charles Moothart. Since high school, the three have worked together on a plethora of projects.

"If you're playing with people for a really long time, you're going to grow together and create special dynamics and special musical relationships," Segall says. *First Taste* is a perfect example of these connections at work, as members of the Freedom Band often switched instruments throughout the recording process.

Segall is currently in the middle of a weekly residency at the Teragram Ballroom in downtown Los Angeles. Every Friday through the end of September, he and the Freedom Band will be playing *First Taste* along with a different album from his catalog in its entirety. "The LA [gig] just sort of started out as me and the band wanting to stay at home for the summer," Segall says. "So we kind of devised this scheme of playing 10 shows in LA, and then when that started getting discussed, we thought, 'Well, what if we play different albums and make it more interesting?' And that snowballed, and then it became, 'Okay, let's do that everywhere.'"

In October, the band leave for a three-day stint in New York, then they'll embark on a quick European tour, with each show featuring a mix of new and classic material. "It's interesting. It's an experiment for sure, but it's fun. It's a ton of work learning all those albums," he says with a laugh, "but it's really worth it."

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

TY SEGALL & FREEDOM BAND play at the Teragram Ballroom, 1234 W Seventh St., Los Angeles, (213) 689-9100; teragramballroom.com. Aug. 18, *First Taste + Goodbye Bread*, with the Intelligence; Aug. 23, with Oeg Bogo; Aug. 30 *First Taste + Emotional Mugger*, with Lamps; Sept. 6, with the Orange Man; Sept. 13, *First Taste + Manipulator*, with Ruth Garbus; Sept. 20 & 27, with DMBQ. Shows, 9 p.m. $28. All ages.

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CARRIE PARLINCO

I Love the '90s

Get ready to smile as blink-182 returns to OC

BY JIMMY ALVAREZ

It's been nearly 30 years since blink-182 took us to Sombrero, and we still want to go to the rock show with our favorite Warped Tour band. Thanks to their radio-friendly, upbeat melodies and catchy hooks, plus high-energy shows and infectious attitude, they are among the most influential pop-punk bands to come out of the '90s.

Despite all their irreverent teen-like antics, blink-182 have a history that includes unbelievable success and some not-so-good times. They've survived loss, heartbreak, plane crashes and lineup changes, but the band members remain well-grounded and wickedly funny. Indeed, aside from the great tunes and epic videos, I'd say their humor greatly contributes to why fans love them so much; their songs make us laugh, cry, smile and recognize that not all conspiracy theories are dumb.

And after all these years, they're still playing music on their own terms. Mark Hoppus remains on bass and fronts most vocals, Travis Barker continues to pound the drums, and Matt Skiba anchors the band on lead guitar and vocals. But what makes these guys larger than life? Barker is the poster child for everything and anything cool, Hoppus is a real pro at the top of his game, and Skiba is a great-yet-humble musician. Collectively, they are electric and remain the juggernauts of skateboarding's musical subculture.

Anyone who is old enough to have gone to a Warped Tour show knows about them. The band started in Poway and were known as Duck Tape, then Figure 8. (Before joining blink, Barker was an Aquabat.) And in those early days, Hoppus was in and out of the band numerous times. Influenced by such greats as Bad Religion, the Cure, Descendents, the Ramones, NOFX, Pennywise and Jimmy Eat World, blink crafted music about aliens, rocks shows, small things, first dates, Jack and Sally, and M&M's. Hoppus and Barker recently agreed that they count their 1994 demo, *Buddha*, as their first album, bringing their total count to eight.

At the Back to the Beach festival in Huntington Beach in April, we caught up with Hoppus, who told us he was very excited about the new record they were working on, appropriately titled *Nine*, adding that it contained some of the best work they've done. That was a bold statement considering the success of their 2016 album, *California*. Set to be released on Sept. 20, *Nine* will include the singles "Blame It On My Youth," "Generational Divide" and "Happy Days," all of which have already hit the airwaves and prove Hoppus wasn't kidding. These tunes are really, really good. While we live vicariously through their music and expect them to make us feel as if we're still teenagers, these new songs sound a little more mature ... kind of like those of us who grew up with blink.

I solicited blink memories via social media and received this response from Jose Johnny Corona that speaks volumes: "'M+Ms' is my favorite song. It reminds me of skating around downtown Huntington Beach in the summer with [my] crew of friends, body-boarding, meeting girls and lots of underage drinking. At one of their shows, I remember looking around, and all my friends were there. I felt at home, and all was right with the world."

Life is good if you're a local blink fan. New tunes are out, and the band's tour with rapper Lil Wayne is stopping in Irvine on Tuesday. Slide into your Doc Martens and check out these alt-rock legends live—you'll smile like it's Halloween on Christmas.

blink-182
with Lil Wayne at FivePoint Amphitheatre, 14800 Chinon, Irvine, (949) 988-6900, concerts1.livenation.com. Tues., 7 p.m. $19.50-$172.50. All ages.

COURTESY OF SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT

Friday

ADOLESCENTS, THE VULTURAS, GREG ANTISTA & THE LONELY STREETS: 8 p.m., $20. 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 434-8282, www.alexsbar.com.

BAY LEDGES, THE PALMS: 9 p.m. $15, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana (714) 957-0600; observatoryoc.com.

BREAKTHRU PRESENTS JMACK, KILL DR KAPTURE, PUSHING VEROM CA, RISR IT ALL, NICK FRISKY EXPERIENCE, TOMORROW'S ANTHEM: 7 p.m., $13, all ages. Chain Reaction, 1652 W. Lincoln Ave., Anaheim, (714) 535-6067, allages.com.

THE ENGLISH BEAT: 8 p.m., $26, all ages. The Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930; thecoachhouse.com.

THE GRINNS, CARPOOL TUNNEL, PSYCHIC BARRIER, 3LH, STRAWBERKY ARMY, MAKEOUT REEF: 7 p.m. $7, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; observatoryoc.com.

LATE NIGHT UM ON, DEAD POET SOCIETY, GRAVES & THE BAD WEATHER, THE DEANS: 8 p.m. $5. 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa, (949) 764-0039; wayfarercm.com.

SKINLAB, ARRIVAL OF AUTUMN, CEREBELLION, FORGOTTEN LEGION: 8 p.m., $15, 21+. The Karman Bar, 28022 Cape Dr., Laguna Niguel, (949) 582-5909; www.thekarmanbar.com.

SWEET BARY J'AI AND THE WOMEN IN JAZZ ALL-STARS: 7 p.m., free, all ages. Argyros Plaza at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787; scfta.org.

Saturday

BLACK POOL, SKIN MAG, ROX DREAMS: 9 p.m. $13, all ages. The Constellation Room, observatoryoc.com.

THE DICKIES, THE VOIDS: 8 p.m., $12, all ages. Chain Reaction, allages.com.

FARTBARF, R. CLOWN, NECTARINES, THE TENTH: 8 p.m., $10. 21+. Alex's Bar, www.alexsbar.com.

FOURTH ANNUAL TIKI NIGHT, FEATURING THE HULA GIRLS, URULENA, ALOHA FROM HELL: 7 p.m. $10-$12, 21+. The Karman Bar, www.thekarmanbar.com.

GAP GIRLS, BRUTUS VIII: 7 p.m., $12-$14, all ages. Programme Skate & Sound, 2495 E. Chapman Ave., Fullerton, (714) 798-7565; www.facebook.com/programmehq.

MARILYN MCCOO & BILLY DAVIS JR.: 8 p.m., $50, all ages. The Coach House, thecoachhouse.com.

STICK TO YOUR GUNS, COUNTERPARTS, TERROR, SANCTION, YEAR OF THE KNIFE: 6:30 p.m., $18, all ages. The Observatory, observatoryoc.com.

SUPER MADNES, STEMAGE, EXTRA LIVES: 8 p.m., $10. 21+. The Wayfarer, wayfarercm.com.

THIRD ANNUAL C4OCRADIO BASH, FEATURING AUGMENTED CHASO, ANGELES, STAREN BLACK, DEATH OF THE AUTHOR, ANXIOUS ANNIE. 6 p.m., $10. 21+. Malone's Bar & Grill, 604 E. Dyer Rd., Santa Ana. (714) 824-4566, c4ocradio.com.

WANK, HOORAY FOR OUR SIDE, MONODELUX, THE TRAGIC RADICALS, FEVER DREAM, DEATHVALLEY TRIO: 7 p.m., $10-$12, all ages. The Doll Hut, 107 S. Adams St., Anaheim, (562) 277-0175; www.worldfamousdollhut.com.

Sunday

GRACE VANDERWAAL, JADE JACKSON: 8 p.m., $50-$200, all ages. The Observatory, observatoryoc.com.

SAVOR—SANTANA TRIBUTE BAND: 7 p.m. $20, all ages. The Coach House, thecoachhouse.com.

THEBREEZEWITHFLO; VENUS HIDES; MASH; SHAMAN CULT: 9 p.m. free. 21+. The Continental Room, 115 W. Santa Fe Ave., Fullerton; www.facebook.com/continentalroom.

Monday

CADAVERIC INCUBATOR; TORTURE RACK, NEKRO ORUNKZ, MORTAL WOUND: 9 p.m., $10-$13. 21+. Que Sera, 1923 E. Seventh St., Long Beach, (562) 599-6170; facebook.com/thequesera.

CARNAL BLISS, CURSING CONCRETE, MALDITASDROGAS, THE TRAGIC RADICALS; A RAZORBLADE ROMANCE: 8 p.m., free. 21+. The Doll Hut; www.worldfamousdollhut.com.

MEMORY DEN; ELYZR; COSMIC MUSIC; ALEXNDER LUNA: 8 p.m. $5, 21+. La Santa Bar, 223 E. Third St., Santa Ana, (657) 231-6005, lasantaoc.com.

THE NOIR DALIS; PSYCHOTIC REACTION; BLOOM: 9 p.m., free, 21+. The Continental Room, www.facebook.com/continentalroom.

Tuesday

'80S NIGHT WITH GLAMEL TOES: 9 p.m., free, 21+. Hennessey's Tavern, 213 Ocean Ave., Laguna Beach, (949) 494-2743; hennesseystavern.com.

UPON A BURNING BODY, OF VIRTUE, SPEAKING WITH GHOSTS: 6:30 p.m., $16, all ages. The Constellation Room; observatoryoc.com.

Wednesday

DRYWALLERO; DECO NECTICS; PEOPLE FLAVOR: 9 p.m., free. 21+. La Santa Bar, lasantaoc.com.

KOTATHE FRIEND: 9 p.m., $15-$35, all ages. The Constellation Room, observatoryoc.com.

LILBOOTYCALL: 8 p.m., $15, all ages. Chain Reaction, allages.com.

NOWHERE FAST—MORRISSEY & THE SMITHS TRIBUTE ACT: 9 p.m., $5. 21+. The Continental Room, www.facebook.com/continentalroom.

RILEY AND THE ROXIES; MONAKO DAVIS, TAYJA: 7 p.m., $5. 21+. The Wayfarer, wayfarercm.com.

Thursday, Aug. 29

ACOUSTIC THURSDAYS, FEATURING DANNY OSBORNE, ALAEDDIN, CJ HAZARD AND FRIENDS. 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Karman Bar, www.thekarmanbar.com.

COUNTERFEIT JACKS, 390; 20 MINUTE MILE: 8 p.m., $5. 21+. The Doll Hut; www.worldfamousdollhut.com.

THE COURTNEYS; IAN SWEET, DUMMY: 9 p.m. $12, all ages. The Constellation Room; observatoryoc.com.

HOWLIN RAIN; PACIFIC RANGE: 8 p.m., $10, 21+. The Wayfarer, wayfarercm.com.

KATCHAFIRE: 6 p.m., $20-$25, all ages. Garden Amp, 12172 Main St., Garden Grove, (949) 415-8544, gardenamp.com.

BAVOYBROWN, SUITCASE JOHNNY: 8 p.m., $20, all ages. The Coach House, thecoachhouse.com.

THE SLEEPERZ, YOUTH LARGE, CALM KILL, GALENA: 8 p.m., $5, 21+. Alex's Bar, www.alexsbar.com.

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Quickies

I took Molly with my best bud. We didn't mess around—we're both straight guys—but one of the things I told him is that I would much rather eat pussy than fuck, and one of the things he told me is that he's not at all into eating pussy and pretty much only likes to fuck. I think we'd make a great team. We're both good-looking, athletic dudes, and we should find a woman who loves to have her pussy eaten and get fucked. What say you?

Ultimate Package Deal

I would say, "FUCK YES!" If I were a woman, IUPD, which I'm not. And while I can't promise you every woman will have the same reaction I did, some women most definitely will.

I'm a male in my late 50s. I went to a urologist for my erection problem, which was helped with erectile-dysfunction (ED) medication. But orgasms are very hard to achieve. My girlfriend appreciates the erections, but I would also like to climax.

Pills Inhibiting Lusty Loads

Tits and dicks both sag with age, which is why push-up bras and push-up pills were invented. And while ED meds do make it easier for a guy to get an erection, they can also make it more difficult for a guy to climax. Upside: You last longer. Downside: You may sometimes have sex without climaxing. Or you can shift your perspective and try to see this downside as a secret upside. Sometimes you get to enjoy sex without climaxing—and next time, when you do climax, you'll blow a bigger load.

I am a bisexual man who's active in the sex-positive community, and I love playing with couples. I was updating my Feeld profile to reflect this desire, but I realized there's an inconsistent term for a male unicorn. I was hoping you could work your magic and get everyone to agree on a nonbinary term that works for all sexual identities.

Having One Rainbow Name

What's wrong with "unicorn"? The mythical beasts can be female, male, or, I suppose, genderless or genderfluid. They can be anything we want them to be, HORN, since we made them up. And while the term first came into use to describe bi women who weren't just open to having sex with an established, opposite-sex couple, but also open to committing to a couple and forming a poly triad, there's no reason men and/or nonbinary folks who are interested in the same—hooking up with and forming relationships with established couples—couldn't identify as unicorns, too.

I've recently begun to experiment with a few kinky friends. One of them is a voyeur who is super into bukkake. I'd be open to a group bukkake scene, but how do I avoid contracting an STI?

Anonymous Assistant

"On me, not in me" was a safe-sex message crafted in the earliest, darkest, most terrifying days of the AIDS crisis—and a bukkake scene, which involves multiple men ejaculating on one person, is all about "on me," which makes it relatively safe. So long as you're careful not to get anyone's come in your eyes (ocular gonorrhea, syphilis and chlamydia are all things) or on your hole(s), you won't have anything to worry about.

I'm a 46-year-old man, and I recently met a 31-year-old woman. We have not had PIV sex yet, but we have enjoyed several nights of cuddling, spooning, etc. as the relationship progresses. She has made it very clear she wants our first time to be a fairy-tale evening, so we have yet to take things past mild foreplay. Plot twist: After two nights of us sleeping together, I realized she's a sexsomniac. If I put my arm around her to cuddle when she's asleep, she immediately sexually responds to the skin-to-skin contact. On two occasions, she has performed oral on me. I'm not complaining, as this is quite possibly every guy's dream. My question is around consent when dealing with situations like this.

She's My Dream Girl

Unless your new girlfriend gave you permission to initiate skin-to-skin contact in the middle of the night—unless she not only didn't have a problem with the first blowjob you accidentally triggered, but also explicitly gave you the go-ahead to trigger more—you have already and repeatedly violated her consent. Most people who are partnered with sexsomniacs prefer not to have sex with their partners when they're unconscious, but some do—with their sexsomniac partner's prior consent. It's a gray area, but unless there are details you've omitted—details such as your partner saying, "I blew you in my sleep? Really! Neat! I'm happy to keep doing that!"—stop initiating skin-to-skin contact. (You should care about consent, and you should stop.)

I've been seeing a guy. We're not really "boyfriend and girlfriend," and we're not exclusive. Last night, he and my best friend and I were all hanging out in his bedroom. After a while, I went to sleep on the couch in the living room and left them in the bedroom. When I woke up, they were having sex. I had told them both it was okay for them to have sex with each other, but I didn't expect them to do it when I was just in the other room.

Unwelcome Personal Surprise Emerging Totally

You're not exclusive, UPSET, and you gave this guy and your best friend permission to fuck, and . . . they fucked. But you got something out of it, too: You learned an important lesson. If you give someone permission to do something with someone else sometime, and both those someones are sitting on a bed, you need to bring up any and all additional conditions before falling asleep on the couch in the next room.

On the Lovecast (savagelovecast.com), when your twin brother is a white supremacist . . . Contact Dan via mail@savagelove.net, follow him on Twitter @fakedansavage, and follow ITMFA.org.

SavageLove

» DAN SAVAGE

UPCOMING SEX EDUCATION EVENTS

HOW TO GIVE A WORLD CLASS BLOWJOB
WED. SEPT. 18TH @ 7:15PM

This workshop is open to women only and includes tips and techniques for handjobs and blowjobs. Learn how to combat common obstacles like manly odor, hairy undercarriages, to swallow or not, and a sensitive gag reflex. This is our most popular workshop and always sells out, register early! Tickets are $20 per person or bring a friend, 2 for $30 when prepaid by 9/16/19. If space is available, tickets are $30 per person on the day of the workshop.

TALK DIRTY TO ME
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Learn how to master your dirty talk on the phone, via text or in the bedroom. We will cover how to start your dirty chat, what to say, finding the perfect voice for it, and how to harness the bad ass attitude to make it sexy! Tickets are $15 per person or $25 per couple when prepaid by 9/24/19. If space is available, tickets are $25 per person on the day of the workshop.

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Toke of the Week

» JEFFERSON VANBILLIARD

High Style Brewing

I know it's an unpopular opinion, but for the most part, I think beer sucks. There was a time when brands were routinely churning out new and inventive ways to get us all a little loose after a long day, but things got a little out of hand. Who really wants to drink a chocolate coconut porter when it's 80 degrees outside? Not me. For every 10 locally brewed, overpriced beers on the market right now, there's probably only one that would actually end up in my cooler on a weekend trip.

Unfortunately, this column isn't about my ability to chug Coors Light while getting a good base tan, but rather it's about cannabis.

With an inner tube in one hand and my sense of childlike adventure in the other, I recently spent four long days drifting lazily down Kern River, which is so pure you'd almost forget you were only an hour away from Bakersfield. Instead of joining my fellow Americans in our greatest pastime of getting wasted before 11 a.m. in a natural body of water, I planned ahead. With Blum's usual selection of hard-to-find strains and edibles already lining my basket, its latest infused-beverage offering caught my eye.

High Style Brewing was born in the heart of San Diego's renowned craft beer scene, and it shows. Besides being non-alcoholic and great-tasting at 50 calories per serving, this brew contains a 10 milligram dose of potent THC to keep you partying without the possibility of drunkenly cracking your skull on one of the Kern's infamous rocks.

And now that I'm back in OC, I find myself daydreaming about sipping on that magical elixir while enjoying California before that long-overdue earthquake sends us all plunging into the Pacific.

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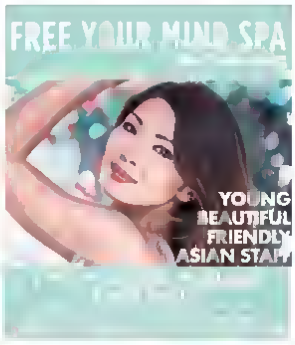
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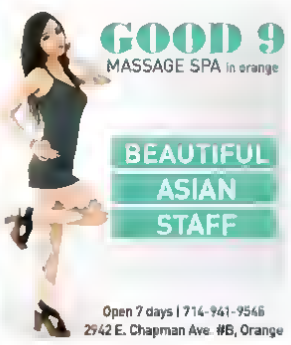
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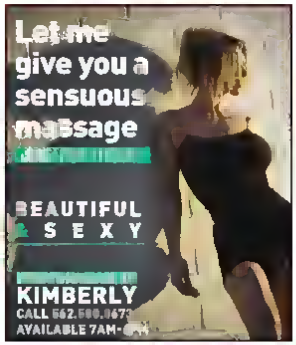
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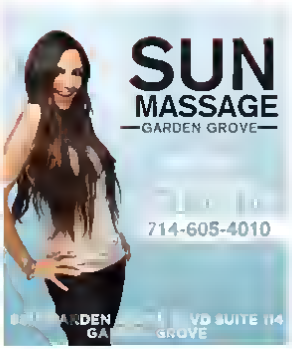
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(Virtual) Reality Bites

Three months of social media: A hate story

BY ALI LERMAN

FEDERICO MEDINA

When people say social media doesn't rule their life, yet they are on it every day, they're a motherfucking liar. Social media gives us our news, pushes much-needed products we never knew were much-needed, and allows us to voice our opinions and thoughts—sometimes a little too much.

A little backstory here: I quit my job and felt it necessary to take some time off to "get my mind right." I spent a large part of that first month being a slave to Twitter (Facebook is dreadful, and Instagram is, like, narcissistic much?), answering and dodging questions about why I quit my job in between jokes about cheese, dick and hating Al Sharpton. (Only two of those are jokes.)

Why do people even need to know about my personal life? Before social-media sites existed, when someone quit, people would keep in touch because they wanted to meet up for lunch or cocktails, possible fucking. It was people they knew, though. These days, internet strangers (good and bad) jump on you from all angles, leaving you feeling as if you just had a menage à vingt. But a bad one. The worst one ever.

I started noticing that a lot of people just have a need to say something or ask questions—endless questions. Why have a question on my thought? Unless it's a "haha," you can keep it.

Maybe I'm just feeling hostile because it's not my choice to hear them. Yet there they are, sucking the joy out of everything. Strangers are ruining your day just because they felt the need to tell you that your thoughts are dumb as fuck, or you look fat, or you should kill yourself because your opinion doesn't match theirs. Or they create a fake handle that is similar to your handle to harass people. (Who the fuck has the time, energy or obsessive loathing for this?!) It all takes a toll. There's a lot to be said about choices, and I know I could log off, but at this point, I'm an addict. Tie me off.

There's also a lot to be said about social media being a public place for people to speak their minds. It can be great. You can voice your concerns, ask your questions, talk about what you ate for lunch, mention who you'd make sweet love to (Hello, Paul Giamatti . . .), and get a way speedier answer by hammering a business via Twitter rather than actually calling them. On the flip-side, there is still all of this . . . speaking. It's all over your timeline and in your comments, and they're reporting you because their narrative doesn't fit yours, AND OMG, OUTRAGE AND TRIGGERING. Urgh.

I was feeling the burn of hate deep inside within the first 10 minutes of being awake. No one should feel that on top of feeling "like this" in the morning. I started thinking about working business hours just to avoid daytime social media, but then I decided to grow tomatoes instead. I posted it on my Instagram story, and opinions start rolling in. It's a fucking tomato. Seriously, people.

In month two, the hate was mounting. Watching adults gang up on people was blowing my mind. The way some speak to the president stupefied me daily. We get it: You detest him. I wrote in my dad's name on my ballot, so really I don't give a fuck. The things people say about certain women depending on what "side" you're on is also wildly uncalled for. It's sheer hypocrisy. And it's not just women. It's men, too. Oh, wait, I mean all genders, non-genders, non-humans, all races, non-races, religions and non-religions, blah, blah, blah. Heaven forbid we say the wrong thing while "grown-ups" are threatening and bullying children, people are killing themselves over words and killing one another over opinions, and lives are being ruined by doxxing. There's race baiting, twisting words, and people being shamed with memes because they simply had a bad hair day. Every day, it got worse. I began stress eating and rolling my eyes more, so I made another appointment to see my shrink.

Month three, I didn't want to tweet too early or "like" anything because then people would know I was awake. It was truly starting to overwhelm my being. Socials have become an invasion of privacy and something we're thinking about way too much. We all know it, but we can't stop.

So, I made a Michael Jackson joke regarding him liking kids' buttholes. But wait. I made the joke to OJ Simpson because he posted a video reminiscing about MJ on the 10th anniversary of his death. Was it a tasteful joke? No. I get that. But did I make it to OJ "if the glove doesn't fit, you must acquit" Simpson? Sure as hell did. Soon after, a veritable storm of psychotic MJ fans called me a stupid bitch, a pedophile who is projecting (what the entire fuck?!), a racist white girl who hates black men (LOL), a Jennifer Tilly wannabe (not sure how *that's* an insult), a whore and a slut. (Valid.) My life was also threatened several times, and one totally sane fan even contacted my (former) employer and called for my firing. They obviously just searched out Michael Jackson's name. All of this over a joke about a dead dude who can't hear or see anyone "sticking up for him" in a way that I'm sure he wouldn't approve of. Although, how well did we really know the man? The responses seemed to be never-ending, and I was consumed for days. After a lifetime of loving Michael Jackson, I now despise him. Well done, MJ fans.

After logging off to write this, I must say my excessive spin into social media left me with a dwindling faith in human kindness. Because while your account may be all rainbows and unicorns, there is a whole other dark side to it. And it's angry, and it hates you—and me. Yeah, it gave me a human connection when I was bored, cheered me up when I was feeling down (looking at you, mini-pig videos), and made me cringe/laugh while watching those seeking the ultimate real-time approval they so desperately need. But relying mostly on social media to fill my time for the past few months has left me empty, hateful, bitter. I'm not accepted for the thoughts that I own. Sure, there are exceptions to every rule, but this is the truth of how it left me. So I guess this is some sort of PSA, a warning that filling your days and nights with social media is a true disservice. It's a drug, and as with all drugs, there should be a warning label.

At least it made me want to get back to work and detox from all that social media (48 hours max, though, okay? Thanks).

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